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A SPOKE IN THE WHEEL OF A GRAND TOUR

PAGE 3



THE LAST WOMEN OF GREENHAM

PLUS SHOPPING, OUTDOORS, TRAVEL



£10,000 FOR A FROCK? IT'S NO JOKE

COVER STORY

Former Blair aide caught fiddling his expenses now works for top lobbyist

A LOBBYIST who worked for Tony Blair during the general election campaign left a top job in government relations where he had been caught fiddling expenses and forging his boss's signature.

Tim Fallon left BAA, formerly the British Airports Authority, in February and now works for a leading political consultancy, advising clients on how to deal with ministers.

Mr Fallon is a director at

Lowell Hill Poll Ltd, the company set up by Tim Bell, Baroness Thatcher's public relations guru and campaigner. While at BAA ahead of government relations one of Mr Fallon's tasks was to persuade ministers to give approval to widening the M1 in order to make a fifth terminal at Heathrow feasible. Approval was announced yesterday.

Mr Fallon worked for the company for about two years. During the election campaign, he was seconded to Mr Blair's office. Within months of his return to BAA, however, questions were raised about claims on his corporate American Express card.

On 16 February, at the time of his departure, Sheila Clark, BAA head of human resources, told him the company wanted to reclaim from his pension contributions "monies outstanding to BAA which were the result of false claims made by yourself on your company credit card... This may be a useful way of assisting you in paying back a portion of £1,570."

The Independent has established that Mr Fallon signed a form on 2 March authorising the deductions "... as a result of false accounting in respect of my BAA company credit card". Des Wilson, director of corporate and public affairs at BAA, said Mr Fallon's departure had been planned for some time, was amicable and had nothing to do with expenses irregularities. Mr Fallon was repaying a "company loan".

"At the time Tim was leaving there were discrepancies in expenses that had as much as anything to do with the fact that we had been incredibly busy and had not conformed with procedures," he said.

However, The Independent has obtained details of a draft statement written by Mr Fallon in which he says: "I took it upon myself to enter explanations for lunches/dinners that were not accurate. Whereas these claims were genuine business expenses, the explanations were misleading. Associated with this mis-administration of my statements was the fact that on occasions ... I authorised these claims forms myself, signing off in Andrew Currie's name."

Mr Currie is an assistant director of BAA's corporate and public affairs department.

"This is something I am particularly ashamed of," wrote Mr Fallon. "The final main area of wrong-doing is that on certain occasions I have used my Amex card to pay for personal expenses. For some of these expenses, I have declared them and I have paid the company back in full. For others I have

not and have failed to declare them truthfully.

"This practice is dishonest and wholly wrong ... I cannot adequately explain the deep sense of regret I feel. Regret that I have let down my company and regret that I have let down colleagues who over the last couple of years have helped, nurtured and supported me."

Mr Fallon failed to return calls yesterday.

Tyneside in uproar as 1,000 jobs go

THE NORTH-east of England was dealt a hammer blow yesterday as the German electronics giant Siemens announced the closure of its Elbn semiconductor plant on Tyneside with the loss of 1,000 jobs.

The shock decision was greeted with anger and dismay by local businesses, trade unions and politicians while the Conservative Trade and Industry spokesman John Redwood, blamed the closure on the strong pound.

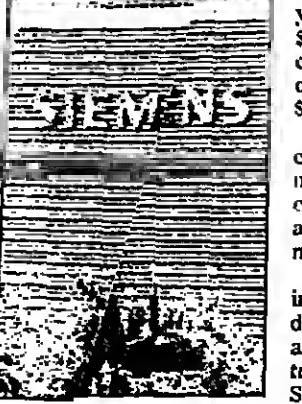
But Siemens said that the state-of-the-art plant, opened only a year ago by the Queen, was the victim of overcapacity, a 95 per cent fall in microchip prices and dumping by Far East manufacturers.

The company pledged to repay the loan in government subsidies it received to help build the facility and announced that it had joined a task force set up by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Peter Mandelson, to try and rescue the plant.

Mr Mandelson said: "Siemens may be leaving north Tyneside but the plant isn't and we must do everything we can to find an alternative owner for it."

Alan Wood, the chief executive of Siemens, said the chance of finding a buyer were low and that the plant would come up with one production could be run down from the end of next month.

There was growing anger last night as Siemens had selected the Tyneside plant for closure, one of the five semiconductor facilities it operates around the world. It has similar plants in France, the United States, Taiwan and France.



The Siemens factory on Tyneside is to close

Mr Wood paid tribute to the workforce on north Tyneside, saying that the plant had been an example of the terrible damage the Government's economic policies are inflicting on exporters, on manufacturing confidence and on jobs."

But Siemens said the impact of the pound was marginal. When the go-ahead was given for the plant in 1995, Siemens forecast that the worldwide market for semiconductors would reach \$200bn by this year. It has only reached \$145bn. At the same time, overcapacity has brought the price of memory chips crashing from \$55 to \$3 in three years.

The Tyneside plant also recently lost a partnership agreement with a Taiwanese company that would have guaranteed half its output for the next 10 years.

The likely closure is a crushing blow for the area. When the decision to build the plant was announced in 1995, job centres in Wallsend and North Shields received 4,000 telephone calls in three hours.

At the official opening last year the Queen said it would put Britain at the "forefront of semiconductor manufacturing". However, within months of production starting, Siemens plans for a second phase of development which would have added a further 300 jobs.

Mr Mandelson said: "This is a very savage blow and I feel very strongly for the workforce and their families who are affected by this. He said "every effort" would be made to secure the plant's future.

Business Outlook, page 17



President Bill Clinton at a fund-raiser for the North Carolina Senate race this week

Clinton vows to tell the truth

BY MARY DEJEVINSKY in Washington

IN HIS first response to the mounting crisis over his relations with Monica Lewinsky, President Bill Clinton said that he was looking forward to testifying to prosecutors and promised to do so truthfully.

Mr Clinton deviated from the subject in hand - a paean to the US economy after better-than-expected second-quarter figures - to tell reporters: "No one wants to get this matter behind us more than I do ... I'm looking forward to the opportunity of testifying. I will do so completely and truthfully."

Mr Clinton is scheduled to give videotaped evidence to prosecutors from the White House on 17 August. Ms Lewinsky, who has immunity from prosecution if she now admits to an affair, is expected to appear before the grand jury in the next two weeks.

Meanwhile, officials and legal analysts close to the White House were entering the fray to play down the significance of material evidence, including a dress and telephone messages, surrendered by Monica Lewinsky to prosecutors earlier in the week. They were responding to reports that the dress had been sent to FBI laboratories to be tested for semen stains.

AFP

Viagra swoop excites police

DID THE police and officials from the Medicine Control Agency think they were looking for a "hardened" criminal? It is impossible to say, but this week, acting on a tip-off, they raided a sex-shop in Soho, London, and seized 14 cases of Viagra, the erection-enhancing wonder-drug.

It is not an uplifting tale. The officials made a test purchase, buying one pill for £40 before preparing to raid the shop.

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

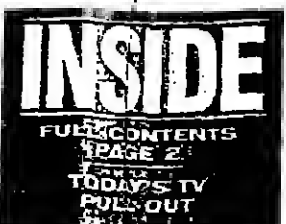
They were sold pills that had to be Viagra, and subsequently raided the shop, said a Westminster City Council spokesman. "The person ... may be charged with unlicensed sale of the drug and will certainly be prosecuted for the sale of unlicensed videos and CD-Roms which were also seized."

But what had the man allegedly done wrong, will he not claim he was supplying a demand? "This drug can kill if it is taken with the wrong types of medicine," said a Department of Health spokesman.

Viagra is unlicensed in Britain and only available from doctors who agree to take all

legal responsibility should something go wrong. It is reportedly being sold to night-clubbers for £25 a time. It was launched in the US and has been used by 2 million men.

If charged and found guilty, the shop-owner could face an unlimited fine or even two years in prison. Yes, yes, yes, it does sound like a bit of a stiff sentence.



HOME NEWS

Ministers are to be questioned behind closed doors at this year's Labour Party conference

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HOME NEWS

The Chief Constable of Gwent will face a tribunal over allegations of misconduct

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POLITICS

Britain yesterday sought to take the high ground over landmines by bringing in a total ban

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FOREIGN NEWS

Eight years of sanctions have been worse for Iraq than three years of bombing for Germany

PAGE 12

FOREIGN NEWS

The hearings designed to put decades of apartheid brutality to rest came to an end yesterday

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BUSINESS

The end is in sight for the white telephone box monopoly in Hull, Ofel said yesterday

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SPORT

Damon Hill may have to take a £2m pay cut to stay with the Jordan Formula One team next season

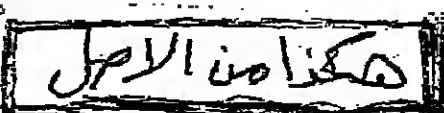
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"One ring and I was covered," quips Jeweller. **0800 670 620**

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Spanish flamenco dancers rehearse for the Bronhaha street theatre festival which opens in Liverpool today

Mike Poloway/UNP

Corrupt staff run massive passport scam

CORRUPT HOME Office officials are making "enormous" sums of money from a thriving passport racket, a court heard yesterday.

They were said to be part of a "complex network" charging up to £2,500 a time for special passport stamps allowing foreigners leave to remain in Britain indefinitely.

There are individuals who have made enormous sums of money and are very wealthy as a result of this on-going practice, defence barrister Dominic D'Souza said.

He told Inner London Crown Court there was evidence that his client, former Home Office

BY MELVYN HOWE

official Samuel Essuah, had been threatened with a gun and told to keep quiet.

The court heard that Essuah, who received a 12-month sentence after admitting his role in the lucrative scam, was no longer working for the Civil Service when he became involved. But his knowledge of Home Office immigration procedures would have been useful.

Mark Kemsey, prosecuting, said Essuah, of Kilburn, north-west London, was suspended from the asylum screening unit for a separate matter in 1992, two years before he turned to crime.

Well-known in the Ghanaian community, he claimed he was still a civil servant and could arrange indefinite "leave to stay" stamps to be put into the passports of his fellow countrymen. Four people paid between £2,000 to £2,500 for the stamp, not realising it had been issued illegally.

The money-spinning swindle was exposed when Ghana produced a smaller passport and told all its nationals in Britain to change their old ones.

When the four that Essuah had helped handed theirs over, Home Office records revealed they had not been given permission to remain in Britain.

"The Crown has accepted in this case that there are others involved," said Mr Kemsey.

"The defendant was the courier; he was the go-between... it appears the money has been handed on to others except

for £100 to £200 per transaction that went to him," he added.

Mr D'Souza said Essuah, who admitted four counts of "making arrangements for securing or facilitating leave to remain" in the UK, had intended to help people only on a limited basis. "But thereafter it spiralled out of control," he said.

He told the court his client was later to speak of being "threatened with a gun and told to keep quiet about what was happening".

"He was so concerned, he gave his name and telephone number to those witnesses and indicated that if anything should happen to him they should contact the police."

The barrister continued: "There are serious implications as far as the Home Office is concerned in that there appears to be a complex network of corruption in the Home Office itself involving the fraudulent granting of leave to remain stamps for profit."

Individuals of higher rank in the Home Office were "pulling the purse strings".

"Mr Essuah had very limited involvement in what appears to be a very much larger and very much more serious conspiracy so far as other individuals are concerned."

Passing sentence, Judge Jeremy Fordham said that while he gave Essuah full credit for his pleas of guilty, the fact remained he was "involved in offences of very serious gravity". The operation "struck at the heart" of Britain's immigration policies.

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Tribunal will decide police chief's fate

A CHIEF CONSTABLE sus-

sended following allegations of misconduct must face an investigation before an independent tribunal. Frank Wilkinson, Chief Constable of Gwent, will be the first officer of his rank to be dealt with in this way.

The decision was made yesterday at a private session of the Gwent Police Authority, which Mr Wilkinson attended to make a statement about the allegations. The affair dates back nine months, when Mr Wilkinson, 51, was sent home after allegations surrounding the issuing of a speeding ticket to a prominent councillor and the award of contracts.

The allegations, made by the Deputy Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constable, also concerned the secondment of scenes-of-crimes officers to assist the UN war-crimes unit in Bosnia. The allegations were investigated by the Police Complaints Authority and the Crown Prosecution Service advised that no charges should be brought against the Chief Constable.

Mr Wilkinson, who has always maintained his innocence, spoke to the authority for 45 minutes yesterday. After he emerged from the meeting at Caerphilly, in South Wales, he said: "We would all want it to be resolved as soon as possible. That would be to the benefit of the police force and the com-

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

munity in Gwent as well." Asked how he was dealing with the suspension, he said he would "rather be at work".

The police authority could have decided to ignore the allegations and reinstate Mr Wilkinson immediately. Instead, it decided to refer the matter to an independent tribunal, expected to be headed by a retired judge and assisted by assessors, including a chief constable or former chief constable. Until then Mr Wilkinson will remain suspended.

David Turnbull, chairman of Gwent Police Authority, said: "The tribunal will decide if the charges are to be dismissed or are proven. If proven, it will recommend to the police authority whether or not any punishment should be imposed."

"Every effort will be made to undertake the completion of the statutory procedure as speedily as practicable."

After the tribunal has heard Mr Wilkinson's case, the police authority will decide what action to take. Its powers range from taking no further action to dismissal. The tribunal will be headed by a senior legal figure appointed by the Lord Chancellor and, if Mr Wilkinson should wish to appeal, he could only do so to the Home Secretary, Jack Straw.

Met to test recruits on racial awareness

THE METROPOLITAN Police is to improve training and recruitment in a bid to counter racism within the force, following the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Paul Condon outlined several new measures in his submission to the Lawrence Inquiry earlier yesterday, which he said would help combat racism within the force, and improve the way it handles racially motivated crime.

Sir Paul Condon said: "We recognise that, in the eyes of individuals and communities in

London, police action may be perceived and experienced as racist, regardless of the intent behind the actions. One some occasions the racist behaviour may be intentional on the part of the police officers."

Sir Paul said future selection procedures would include a test of the candidate's awareness of race issues, which would be open to external scrutiny. The Metropolitan Police force also proposes monitoring how many people from ethnic communities are stopped and searched, arrested and charged.

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Safety at work: Judge slams mining industry's 'appalling and cynical disregard' for health and safety of its workers



Raymond Chapman, who can barely use his hands: 'They're not good for much'

Miners win fight for £500m payout

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

THOUSANDS of miners who suffered a debilitating condition as a result of years spent working at the coalface yesterday won their historic battle for compensation.

In a decision that could see up to £500m paid in compensation, the Court of Appeal ruled that British Coal was liable for all cases of Vibration White Finger (VWF), or Raynaud's disease in its miners. The condition, which affects the functioning of the hands and fingers, is caused by prolonged exposure to vibration - typically from pneumatic drills or other such tools.

The ruling comes as the Government waits to learn how much money it will have to pay out to former miners claiming compensation for breathing in coal dust. There are up to 50,000 miners claiming.

Yesterday, three Court of Appeal judges ruling on VWF said that the Coal Board, run by the Department of Trade and Industry since privatisation, should have warned the miners of the dangers they faced. They should also have carried out more checks on the miners.

Lord Justice Judge, who yesterday ruled on nine test



Hands of miners suffering from VWF. Photo by Gaila Saggin

cases representative of 25,000 others, said: "Provided the condition is recognised in its early minor form it will normally be cured by removing the work employee in question from work with vibrating tools."

One solicitor who represented many of the miners, Roger Madocks of Thompsons, said the Government's appeal had been pointless.

"Taxpayers will now pick up the bill," he said. "They should demand to know how a nationalised industry could be run with such appalling, and at times cynical, disregard for the health and safety of those who worked in it."

Another solicitor, Andrew

Tucker, a partner of Irwin Mitchell, added: "The war has been won by the miners and we have shown that the Government's decision to appeal against the compensation levels was always misconceived."

The legal action dated from 1981, when thousands of miners claimed for compensation. Since then there have been two High Court trials and two appeals. While British Coal had admitted it did nothing to minimise the risk of injury, it was not prepared to admit that any of the miners were actually suffering from VWF.

After yesterday's ruling the energy minister, John Battle, promised that the Government

would try and ensure compensation claims were dealt with quickly. Up to 3,000 of the more seriously affected miners could expect interim payments of £1,000 within three weeks. Damages awards challenged by British Coal ranged from £5,456 to £50,546.

Mr Battle said: "We sought clarification because we believed that was the prudent and responsible course of action. We now have that clarification. Miners with valid claims will be compensated fairly and in line with the court's ruling."

"We were certainly not out to reduce levels of compensation below what the court deems fair. This was not a cost reduction exercise but about delivering fairness and justice."

Arthur Scargill, the president of the National Union of Mineworkers said: "The decision means thousands of miners will benefit. It vindicates the long campaign conducted by the National Union of Mineworkers for justice for all miners suffering from this dreadful disease."

Up to 50,000 former miners are claiming compensation from the Government for the effects of breathing in coal dust. A Bristol court stayed a decision on the claims earlier this week.

Down the mines at 15, hands useless at 51

RAYMOND CHAPMAN can barely hold steady his cup of tea. A miner for 37 years, he spent 30 of them chipping away at the coalface of Barnborough main pit.

"It was a hard life. I was expected to fill 20 tons of coal in four hours using a pick and shovel," he said. "Sometimes you'd be up to your knees in water. It was a seven-and-a-quarter-hour shift and I had to walk the three miles to and from work."

By his own admission Mr Chapman is bitter with British Coal and feels he deserves any compensation he can get. His solicitor is currently "doing the paperwork" and he hopes to get several thousand pounds in compensation. "Who knows

what I will do with it," he laughed.

Mr Chapman, from Rotherham, was 15 when he started working down the mine, following in the footsteps of his father. For the first few months he worked hauling the coal but then he was moved on to the coalface.

In 1982 his hands started to show the effects of Vibration White Finger. A few years later - hugely disappointed and angry - he was forced to retire on the grounds of ill health.

"I gave the mine the best years of my life," said Mr Chapman, who has four grandchildren. "I think I deserve the compensation. I should have been told what was happening."

I am not the only person in this situation - there are a lot of us who have put in for this.

"There was obviously a lot more money around when you were working, a lot more money coming in than when you're not."

Mr Chapman, whose son is an electrician at the same mine, said he can now barely use his hands.

"They're not good for much. I can't do much with them," he said. "I can't do much gardening because I can't hold things and I can't pull the weeds up and stuff."

"I have also got arthritis in my knees from all the water and damp. It was hard work all right."

ANDREW BUNCOMBE

FT journalists lose battle for damages

FOUR JOURNALISTS have failed in their High Court battle to seek damages for 'injuries to their upper limbs' which they claimed they suffered while working as sub-editors at the Financial Times.

Mr Justice Ian Kennedy yesterday ruled in favour of the newspaper in claims brought by Paul Hannon, Philip Little, Patrick Stiles and Akwema-Jhovi Amosu.

The judge said: "I remain unpersuaded that the plaintiffs have on the balance of probability suffered from the physical problems they variously set out to establish."

The journalists had argued that they suffered biomechanical personal injuries, while the FT had claimed that the prob-

lem was psycho-social. In his ruling, the judge made it clear that the case was not about Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI), stating: "No doctor has argued that such a syndrome exists ... Each plaintiff has complained of specific musculo-skeletal disorders which are familiar in everyday medical practice."

The plaintiffs had alleged negligence and breach of statutory duty by the newspaper during the latter part of 1988. They had claimed that the newspaper did not create a safe working environment when it introduced new technology in 1987.

Mr Justice Kennedy noted: "The paper, in denying liability, has accepted that these four plaintiffs have indeed suffered pain, albeit its case is that they have not suffered any personal injury, and certainly no injury for which it is answerable."

But the judge held that none of the plaintiffs, who were supported in the case by the National Union of Journalists, had "established a material breach of duty, whether common law or statutory, against the paper, and my judgment must be for the defendant."

After the hearing, Robin Pauley of the Financial Times said: "It confirms that the FT is a prudent and decent employer which was in no way negligent in introducing screen-based technology to the editorial department."

Huntsman jailed for 'cruel beating' of protester

A HUNTSMAN who has ridden with the Prince of Wales was jailed for 15 months yesterday for attacking and robbing one of the directors of the League Against Cruel Sports.

Anthony Kirkham, 53, a farmer, kicked Christopher Owen in the head during what the judge called a "cruel beating" and ripped a £1,300 camera from his neck after spotting him filming the Cheshire Hunt at Hootfield Hall, Huxley, near Turporley.

Kirkham, of Ridley Farm, Ridley, near Turporley, had previously been given a 12-month suspended sentence for attacking hunt protesters.

His trial earlier in the week heard how Mr Owen, 42, a driving instructor, had been photo-

graphing the hunt, which Kirkham was following with a group of men in a Land-Rover because he was giving his horse a rest.

Mr Owen told the court a huntsman pointed him out to the men in Kirkham's Land-Rover, which drove towards him at speed. He was chased across a field and through a ditch before being caught and sprayed in the face with a liquid by one of the men. He was hit over the head with a bottle.

Kirkham then approached and told him: "We have got you now, Owen, you're dead." The defendant kicked him in the head and he was kicked about the head and body several more times. Kirkham dragged him to his feet and ripped the

Canon camera from his neck. When he went to the Land-Rover later and asked for his camera back Kirkham punched him in the chest and knocked him to the ground.

The judge, Mr Recorder Gerard Elias, told Kirkham, who had denied robbery, that he had been involved in a most serious assault.

"You targeted a man who was minding his own lawful business and subjected him to a cruel beating which involved you kicking him in the face with your Wellington boot," he said.

Mr Owen said afterwards he feared he was going to be killed during the attack. "I was terrified. It was just like a hunt in which I was the fox," he said.

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مكتبة الامير

Cool Britannia makes tour trade hot

SUMMER 1998 is putting smiles on the faces of travel agents as last-minute tourists desperate to escape Britain's dreary weather pay top prices for a place in the sun.

In one of the gloomiest summers for years, thousands are missing out on the usual short-notice bargain breaks. Most travel agents warn that the few remaining holidays on offer

BY NICOLE VEASH

will be at full brochure price or more. Airtours Holidays, a leading package-tour operator, has taken advantage of the late surge in bookings by bumping up the prices of its most popular destinations by an average of £20.

Earlier this week the company sent a letter to its agents

telling them to maximise their "mutual earning potential".

Anita McEneaney, director of corporate communications, said: "We are selling out very fast, mainly because of poor weather. Price increases are principally for the peak period of school holidays when demand is exceptionally high."

This "fluid pricing" policy, although legal, was condemned

by the National Consumer Council. Its spokesman, Rory Hegarty, said: "This is very bad practice for the consumer. It is unfair, and we would advise people to go with those companies that stick to the brochure price."

Debbie Bloor, of the tour operator Thomson, admitted that this year popular destinations such as Majorca and Ibiza

were far from cheap for sun-seeking families.

Holiday-makers can still get 14-night half-board breaks in Majorca at £585 per person, or in Ibiza at £653 with Thomson, but Ms Bloor admitted they were "not outstanding deals".

She said: "Consumers need to be very flexible this year. Demand is nearly outstripping supply, so they need to take

whatever is on offer, to whatever destination, from whatever departure point."

"We try to discourage people waiting for last-minute deals by offering discounts earlier in the season. Although our brochure price is the ceiling price customers will have to pay."

The Association of British Travel Agents admitted that this could be the best year so far for

the holiday trade. Keith Betton, head of corporate affairs, said:

"More people are going away this year than ever before because of the bad weather and the good exchange rate."

"The industry is already around 5 per cent up on last year."

"The big tour operators have all used fluid pricing policies in the past three years, although

Airtours appears to be the only company operating this way at the moment."

The mainstream tour operator Cosmos still has plenty of holidays in Tenerife and the Algarve.

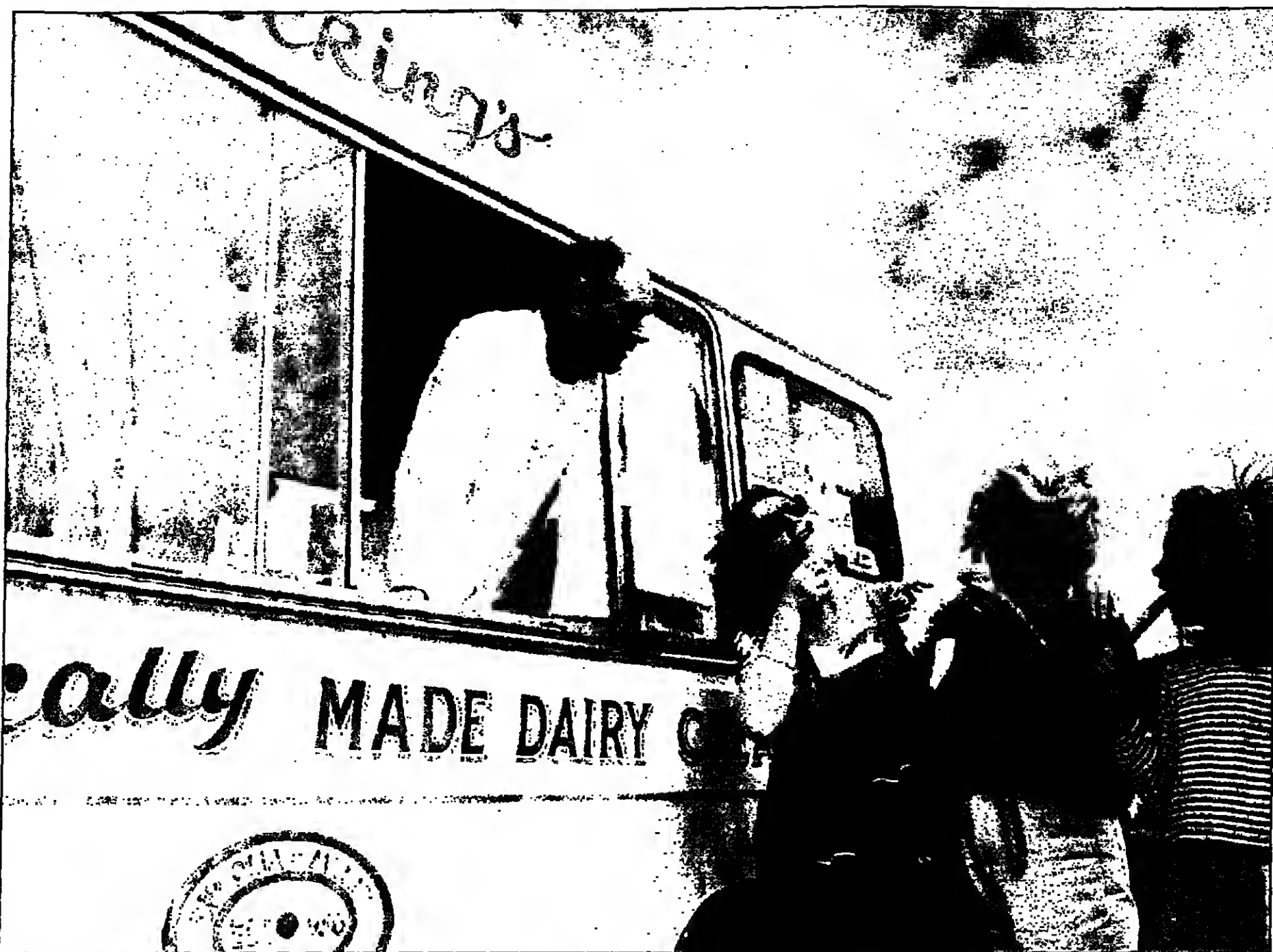
A spokeswoman said: "We've got no bargain-bucket deals but there are still plenty of places for those wanting to get away."

... but is a dampener for the ice cream vendor

GEOFFREY HOCKING is a fourth-generation partner in Hockings ice cream company in Devon. "The lack of sun may mean fewer tourists but those who do holiday here, as well as our regular local customers, buy ice-creams whatever the weather. Stoicism is part of our British make-up. So if people have come here to relax, they'll make absolutely sure that they enjoy themselves. And what better enjoyment is there than a home-made ice cream with a generous dollop of Devon clotted cream?"

...the resort landlord

JIM NORRIS owns the Apollo guest-house in Hastings, East Sussex. "My main enemy this year has been the World Cup more than the weather. The grey and dull summer has lost me business, as many people have opted for a holiday abroad. The repercussions of a World Cup on our doorstep though, have been far more severe. East Sussex usually attracts many Swedes and Norwegians during the summer months, but this year I've barely had to use my phrase-books. Most visitors are making a last-minute, impromptu decision to come here. Hopefully, August will prove to be a more fruitful month."



Geoffrey Hocking sells his wares at the resort of Westward Ho! in Devon. People enjoy themselves regardless of the weather, he says

Eeman Press Agency

SIMON CALDER

WHERE TO GET AWAY

PROSPECTIVE holidaymakers who have not yet booked their holidays still have plenty of options.

Smaller operators say they have no intention of raising prices to take advantage of peak-season demand. John Harding, managing director of Travelscene, said: "Our holidays will remain at published brochure prices, and we have good availability."

City-break bargains are also beginning to appear, with Paris Travel Service selling weekends in the French capital for £99, and the Thomas Cook subsidiary Time Off offering one night in Madrid for £169.

For more exotic destinations, there is no shortage of options. Neil Taylor of Regent Holidays said air fares to Peking are good value at around £400 return.

Long-haul travel company Kionil has just published a brochure dedicated to seasonal bargains. Those willing to endure a longer flight to an exotic location can pick up a week long holiday to Grenada for £499, flight and accommodation only, or for the same price, eight nights in Cuba full board.

With Sterling remaining strong, the best bet for a late-notice break could be a independently assembled holiday. The merger earlier this year of the two largest ferry companies across the English Channel, P&O and Stena, has not led to substantially higher fares for those wishing to cross the Channel. In addition, this summer has seen more new destinations from no-frills airlines than ever before.

...the shop owner

SANDRA SINCLAIR is manager of the John o' Groats Knitwear shop. In the most north-easterly point in Britain, "The bad weather has obviously discouraged potential tourists from making the pilgrimage to John o' Groats. But all the sandy beaches of Spain aren't a patch on the view we enjoy

from here. It gives you a feeling of living, rather than merely existing; there really is nowhere like it. Also, while the tea-shop may be suffering from the lack of visitors, our outdoors shopping section is trading briskly. You would be surprised how many people leave their umbrella at home."

... and the entertainer

KEVIN BARRAND is Resorts and Entertainment Officer in Scarborough. "Deck-chair leases are down 10 per cent from last year... So we're all hoping the sun will come out before the middle of August. It will all be downhill from there if it doesn't. At the moment, the beaches are predictably quiet, as most people

are only using them during the few short periods of sunshine. Looking on the bright side though, the poor summer weather has enabled our new sun-bed range to be launched with ease. We've yet to see any unruly confrontations... between over-keen tourists first thing in the morning."

Factor fifty clothes put sun creams in the shade

BY CLARE GARNER

THE EDWARDIANS had the right idea with their elegant hats and parasols, but technical advances in textile manufacturing have given rise to a new sun-protection factor.

In response to the depleting ozone layer, fashion designers are beginning to explore the use of sun-protective fabrics in their garments as a way of shielding the wearer's skin from the Sun's increasingly harmful rays. Just as sun creams have a sun-protection factor (SPF), so clothes are starting to have an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF).

Karen Scott, a graduate in fashion and millinery from the Royal College of Art and this year's winner of BT's £2,000 bursary for outstanding personal achievement, has designed a line of hats and modern parasols with a sun-protection factor of up to 50 UPF - higher than that provided by the average sun cream.

Miss Scott's Chiaroscuro collection was inspired by her efforts to conceal her own pale skin from the Sun. "People don't realise how we can take fabrics into the future and find interesting and high-tech responses to this changing climate," she said. "I thought it would be a fun exploration, knowing how I feel in the Sun."

"I'm always wanting to shade myself, but I also want to maintain the grace of winter when I can feel good, comfortable and elegant. In summer, with the conventional sun hat plonked on your head, you don't feel very special. I'm trying to confront that situation."



Designer Karen Scott's sun-protective hats

Ruth Xavier

Her hats fall into two categories: the structured pieces and modern parasols, which create a well of shade, and soft voluminous scarves, which veil the neck and wrap the shoulders, some reaching down to cover the hands.

Despite an increased use of sun creams, world skin cancer rates are still increasing. In Britain, there are about 2,000 deaths each year and, in 1992, a study reported an 82 per cent increase in melanomas in Scotland in the previous five years.

Miss Scott is concerned about the general misconception that textiles provide total protection against the effects of ultraviolet rays (UVR). Most summer clothing has a UPF of less than 15. The colour and

shade of a fabric affect its UPF. A dark, heavy, closely woven fabric has the highest UPF - the exact opposite of what the wearer is looking for in summer.

These findings prompted Miss Scott, 28, to research how to increase the UVR resistance of light shades and her graduation catwalk show last month captured the serenity and grace of figures gliding through a bright white heat.

In order to achieve this blend of practicality and elegance in her "dress to protect" Chiaroscuro collection, Miss Scott used ultraviolet absorber products from a chemical company called Clariant UK. Once applied, the coating ensures that only 5 to 10 per cent of ultraviolet rays can penetrate the fabric. Wearing a UPF

50 garment would enable a fair-skinned wearer to spend an extra five hours in the Sun without burning.

Several companies have embraced the need for clothing with a high UPF factor, researching coatings and technical textiles which respond to the environment.

Two Australian companies, Kaola Connection and Sting Ray, have produced a range of ultraviolet protective clothing, including swim suits for children. As part of its Sun Know How campaign, the Health Education Authority in Britain has teamed up with the clothing company Retro UK Ltd to produce children's summer clothing out of fabrics with a UPF of 50.

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سكوتيا الاصل

UK declares total ban on landmines

BUT AS YESTERDAY sought to take the moral high ground over anti-personnel land mines by bringing in a total ban.

The announcement by George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, anticipates an international law on the issue. He is trying to put pressure on countries, including the US, Russia, China, India, Turkey and Pakistan, that have failed to sign the Ottawa Convention banning the weapons.

Mr Robertson declared the prohibition on mines ahead of the anniversary of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, a leading figure in the campaign to ban them.

British forces introduced a moratorium on mines in May last year but they could have been used in "exceptional circumstances". From yesterday there will be no exemptions.

In answer to Chris Mullin, Labour MP for Sunderland South, Mr Robertson said that orders had been issued to all Command Headquarters and training establishments banning mines.

DEFENCE

By BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

"We intend this to be an international example to others," Mr Robertson said.

Britain is already destroying stockpiles and helping in "denuclearisation" projects throughout the world.

Earlier Mr Robertson said the Government was making a concerted effort to persuade other countries to sign the treaty, expected to come into force later this year.

He told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "The most professional army in the world now has said that this is not a system that is morally correct or militarily useful."

"There is a huge problem out there of countries who have still not signed. We must use Britain's moral authority to make sure our position becomes the international standard."

Ian Bray of Oxfam, welcomed the Government's decision and said that the previous

policy of allowing the use of the weapons in exceptional circumstances constituted a "huge anomaly".

Forty countries would need to sign the convention before it passed into international law. By yesterday 37 nations had signed. Mr Bray pointed out that the US was refusing to adopt the policy because it contends that it needs to use anti-personnel landmines in Korea. But America has indicated it was seeking alternatives to the weapons and aimed to ratify the treaty by the year 2002.

Lou McGrath of the Mines Advisory Group, a charitable organisation involved in clearing operations in Angola, Northern Iraq, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, believes the British Army could still encounter problems. He pointed out that the UK was often involved in Nato operations with the USA and Turkey both of which would still deploy the weapons.

Mines were last used by the United Kingdom in the Gulf War when they were dropped by Tornado jets on Iraqi airfields.



George Robertson, with L/Cpl Nikki Nunn of the Royal Logistics Corp, helps to destroy landmines

Fiona Hanson/PA

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A Transport question: can we go now?

A DEMOB-HAPPY House of Commons met for the last time before the summer recess to hear the new Minister of Transport, Dr John Reid, unveil the Government's roads review.

With suitcases packed for European beaches, some MPs were dressed as though they were Gatwick-bound as soon as the House rose. Douglas Hogg (C, Sleaford & North Hykeham) was in a green tweed jacket and grey flannels, while Bob Marshall-Andrews (Lab, Medway) wore a lightweight powder-blue suit ready for the airport lounge.

Dr Reid, who is popular on all sides, took the House by storm in a confident performance, having had 72 hours in his post to mug up on 147 decisions. He announced that building roads will not be the first option but that motorists would be helped by investment in road maintenance.

The Tory spokesman Gillian Shephard gave Dr Reid a generous welcome but her response, which began well, went on and on, incurring the wrath of the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, who flanked Dr Reid.

When Mrs Shephard came to her peroration "jams today and jams tomorrow", Mr Prescott reverted to his backbench hooligan days with sedentary comments: "Patience. What a load of rubbish. You've asked 115 questions."

Dr Reid said he would ignore the 110 "which were merely casting abuse". He reminded the Opposition that they had only built one bypass in 1996-97. "One!" belated Mr Prescott. The minister said that the Tory programme of bypasses he inherited was a "fantasy football wish-list which were never planned or funded".

Dr Reid ended his exchange with Mrs Shephard clearly on top of his brief, earning a public backslap from Mr Prescott: "That's only after 72 hours in the job."

The minister then faced individual questions from about 30 backbenchers, from all sides, specific to

THE SKETCH



their own constituencies.

Matthew Taylor (Truro & St Austell), the Liberal Democrat transport spokesman, felt the cut in the bypass programme was Treasury cost-cutting rather than a conscious environmental policy. He drew groans from Mr Prescott when he said: "This statement is more Brown than Green."

Dr Reid shot back: "I presume they are as united in this as they are on other policies. I look forward to hearing the other six views," as he glowered at the remaining six MPs next to Mr Taylor.

The minister fielded dozens of questions ranging from the Bingley relief road, the Great Barford bypass through to the Winterbourne Stoke bypass and not forgetting the Heddon road improvement scheme. He must have spent the past three days like a rookie London taxi driver mugging up on his A-Z of street names. He was helped surreptitiously by Mr Prescott, who muttered the odd prompt in his ear, and if he had forgotten the odd detail he had the wit to fall back on the time-honoured but perfectly acceptable ministerial cop-out: "I will write to my Honourable Friend."

We got to the end but nearly lost our holidays when the government whip Robert Ainsworth was called upon by Madam Speaker. He sat tight, didn't move and said nothing. "Adjournment," she shrieked. "Move the adjournment." He finally cottoned on and lumbered to his feet. "I beg to move this House do now adjourn." Madam Speaker shot off like a bat out of hell and packed her bikini as MPs followed suit.

THE HOUSE

Crime and Disorder Bill wins assent

THE CRIME AND Disorder Bill, cracking down on nuisance neighbours and bringing faster justice for youths, gained Royal Assent yesterday after ministers bowed to the Lords and left out a move to cut the gay age of consent to 16.

Royal Assent was also announced for the Government of Wales Bill, devolving administration to a Welsh Assembly; the National Minimum Wage Bill, allowing ministers to set a minimum wage of £3.60 an hour for adults and £3 for young people; and the Budget-enacting Finance Bill.

'How Dad's Army won the ratings war



THE SUCCESS of *Dad's Army* is summed up in a line from its first episode when the bumptious Capt. Mainwaring says: "The machine-guns could have a clear field of fire from here to Timothy White's, if it wasn't for that woman in the telephone box."

That formula, a classic celebration of the British amateur, reached its 30th anniversary yesterday, still pulling in millions of viewers for the BBC.

The surviving members of the cast, including Clive Dunn, Bill Pertwee and Ian Lavender, joined the sitcom's writers David Croft and Jimmy Perry for a reunion at the Imperial War Museum in Looe to mark the transmission of the first episode in July 1968.

Eighty episodes were made, telling of the war-time adventures of Capt Mainwaring and the motley crew of the Walmington-on-Sea Home Guard.

That first, black and white series is being re-shown on BBC 2 and attracting 4.6m viewers, making it the channel's third-highest show in the ratings. It is outperforming BBC 2 repeats of *Home Improvement* and *Not the Nine O'Clock News*, and almost matching Channel 4's expensive import *Friends*.

When the series was shown on BBC 1 last year at a peak hour on Saturday nights it had an average of 7 million viewers and a 40 per cent share of viewing, beating more contemporary comedies, such as *The Simpsons*, in the same slot.

At its peak the figures were far higher. With its theme tune

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Editor

of "Who do you think you are kidding Mr Hitler" it drew 21 million viewers, more than soap heavyweights such as *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders* do today.

Geoffrey Perkins, the BBC's head of comedy, believes the show has been critically re-evaluated since its first run. "A lot of contemporary comedy writers had thought it slapstick, but watching it again they appreciate the characterisation and the writing."

"When it first appeared it was not thought likely to be a classic. It was regarded by one critic as full of gags, out characters, which is just nonsense. It was also regarded as controversial because it was still close to the war and it was thought to be disrespectful."

Graham Linehan, the co-creator of *Father Ted*, says creating a classic can be a matter of chance. "Hitting on a bunch of characters who work well together is almost entirely to do with luck. When Arthur Mathews and I started writing *Father Ted* we just wanted it to be funny, we didn't know you needed characters that work well together for it to be long-running."

Linehan believes *Dad's Army* was modern. "The first episode begins with them all made-up as even older, old men reminiscing about the war, so the whole thing is really one long flashback - almost as if they knew it would be a classic."

"It's genius. It is brilliantly weird having an army with an incontinent soldier and a corporal saying, 'Would you mind awfully falling in,' and then fighting about who gets to hold the gun. I love it."

The class warfare between Mainwaring and Wilson, once represented by a monocle, was a key element. When it was first being filmed BBC managers could never understand why the most upper-class officer, played by John Le Mesurier, was being ordered around by Arthur Lowe's middle-class bank manager.

"There are a lot of myths about how that got started," said Jimmy Perry yesterday. "But we decided it was funnier to have the grammar-school boy in charge of the public-school idiot. In fact they were both idiots, but in different ways. It is always funnier to have the idiots in charge. That's how *Fawlty Towers* works too."

Croft and Perry are not keen to analyse their comedy, but David Croft concedes they operated by rules. "It was well-intentioned, not harmful. Something happened, they didn't just sit on a sofa and talk, and although they were amateurs they would always win out in the end."

Kevin Lygo, Channel 4's head of entertainment, believes it is a classic because it is inclusive. "Old people and kids get something from it. Almost every classic comedy is non-exclusive. And as a nation we love the falling Brit. It's why we love *Del Boy*."



Ian Lavender, Clive Dunn and Bill Pertwee at the Imperial War Museum yesterday, and (below), *Dad's Army* in its heyday



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- Only Fools and Horses
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- Hancock's Half Hour
- Steptoe and Son
- Father Ted
- Blitterflies

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- Love Thy Neighbour
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- Terry and June
- Solo
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- Me and My Girl
- All Gas and Gaiters
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- Going Straight
- Bless This House
- Dear John

Extraterrestrial clue to left-handedness

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

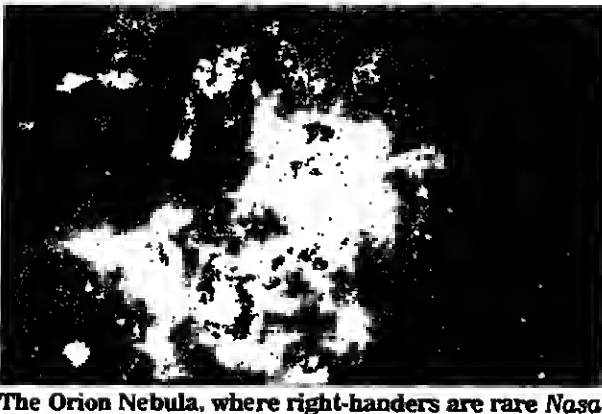
ASTRONOMERS HAVE found evidence to support the controversial theory that the building blocks of life originated in outer space and were carried to Earth on comets about 4 billion years ago.

Scientists have discovered a phenomenon in the region of the Giant Nebula, a massive cloud of gas in the Orion constellation, which could explain why biological molecules on Earth are all "left-handed".

Organic molecules necessary for life, such as amino acids, can exist in one of two forms, which are both right and left-handed mirror images of each other. But in practice they only occur in the left-handed form.

For the past 150 years, scientists have found it difficult to explain why the building blocks of life should all be left-handed when it is just as easy to make the right-handed mirror image.

One possible explanation for the origin of biological left-handedness is that it had an extraterrestrial source which meant that the earliest life forms began using left-handed molecules and, once they start-



The Orion Nebula, where right-handers are rare. NASA

ed, could never use the right-handed forms.

Early support for the idea came with the discovery of an abundance of left-handed amino acids in a meteorite which fell in 1969 in the Murchison area near Victoria in New South Wales, Australia.

Scientists also found that the Murchison meteorite was about 4.5 billion years old, confirming that left-handedness in space predated the origin of life on Earth which occurred about 3.8 billion years ago.

This suggested that the organic molecules necessary for early lifeforms on Earth could have come from space, riding

on the back of comets or meteors during the period when the early world was heavily bombarded.

Another feature of left-right symmetry in biological molecules was discovered in the 1930s. Scientists found that a type of light, called circularly polarised light, which can rotate either clockwise or anti-clockwise, can selectively destroy either right-handed or left-handed molecules depending on the direction the light is rotating.

A team of researchers, which included Professor James Hough of the University of Hertfordshire, report in the current issue of the journal

Science that they have now found a region of circularly polarised infrared light in a region of the Giant Nebula called the Orio Molecular Cloud 1.

"We know that new stars are being formed here, and we also know that organic molecules are present. This region may well be similar to the region in which our own solar system formed," Professor Hough said.

"The circular polarised light in the region we investigated could imprint a preferred handedness in any organic molecules in the region, imprinting those in a cloud beginning to collapse to form a star and its planets," he said.

"These results therefore suggest that the suitability of our planet for life may be as much a consequence of the environment in which our solar system formed as of the local conditions on the early Earth."

Professor Hough said that although the discovery falls short of proof that life's building blocks came from outer space, "We believe it's the most plausible explanation to date."

The astronomers made their discovery using the Anglo-Australian Telescope near Coobarraban in New South Wales and using instruments made at Hertfordshire University.

Killer wins rhino horn fight

BY IAN SHOESMITH

RHINO HORN worth nearly £3 million is to be returned to a convicted killer who plotted to sell it illegally, to the shock and anger of the RSPCA.

Yesterday the Court of Appeal refused to allow the Crown Prosecution Service to appeal to the House of Lords in the case of Wilfred Bull. In February he had been convicted of conspiring to sell the world's largest rhino horn haul, a plot

he hatched from his prison cell where he was serving life for murdering his wife in 1986. Bull, 63, was sentenced to 15 months to run concurrently.

The horns - used as an aphrodisiac and as medicine in the Far East - were confiscated, but in June the Court of Appeal ruled that they should be returned as they were collect-

ed before strict import controls were introduced under the 1985 Control of Trade in Endangered Species Act.

David Bowles, head of the RSPCA's international department, said: "This is an extremely disappointing result and one which will have severe ramifications worldwide."

"By returning the horn to someone convicted of such a serious crime, we are sending out

a confusing message to those we are trying to influence."

"Now there's the possibility that it's going to get back to the international market."

Although the world ban on rhino horn sale started in 1985, similar laws were passed in the UK in 1978. The RSPCA said Bull should have been required to prove that the horns were brought into the UK before introduction of the earlier laws.

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Transport: £125m tunnel near Stonehenge survives, as dozens of building projects fall by the wayside in Whitehall

Ministers' red light for road schemes

EIGHTEEN major road schemes were axed and plans for 60 more shelved despite overwhelming public demand for highways and bypasses, the Government's roads review revealed yesterday.

Nearly 90 per cent of responses to the year-long consultation on the review were in favour of road-building but ministers opted to proceed with only 37 of the 125 possible schemes. Ministers pointed out that 75 per cent of the responses in favour of road-building were prompted by "strong local lobbying campaigns".

The review also angered environmentalists by giving the green light to widening the busiest section of the M25 London orbital road between junctions 12 and 15 near Heathrow airport, intensifying speculation that the go-ahead will be given for the expansion of Heathrow Terminal 5. The plans will see a short section of the highway expanded from 8 to 12 lanes.

"This nonsensical decision

By RANDEEP RAMESH
Transport Correspondent

will make congestion to the west of London worse and eat up nearly £95m that could have been spent on public transport," said Roger Higman, spokesman for the environmental group Friends of the Earth.

Ministers defended the decision, saying this section was "heavily congested", with 200,000 vehicles a day, and that "more capacity is needed".

Other high-profile schemes to be given the green light included the two-mile Polegate bypass outside Eastbourne and a one-and-a-half mile cut-and-cover tunnel on the A303 near Stonehenge in Wiltshire.

John Reid, the transport minister, said one-third of the £125m bill for the tunnel would be met by the Department of Culture, Media and Sports. "It is in recognition that Stonehenge has an international reputation as a beauty spot," he

said. Ministers promised all 37 schemes in the £1.4bn road-building programme would be started within seven years.

The review also included a number of radical measures aimed at easing congestion. Ministers are considering bus lanes and "multi-occupancy lanes" - which would be reserved for cars carrying more than one person - for the M25 motorway, to cut traffic jams.

Tolls, said Mr Reid, will play an important part in funding new road schemes. A pilot study will consider charging motorists to pay for a four-mile tunnel under the Devil's Punchbowl, a Surrey heathland which is home to many rare birds and plants.

Charges paid by motorists using the Dartford crossing in London, which amount to £60m a year, will be switched early next century to funding road improvements after the crossing's development costs have been covered.

The Hull constituency of

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, who is in charge of transport, will be a beneficiary of the review, with a £53m improvement to the nearby A1033.

The roads lobby, however, said it was "disappointed" that the bulk of the schemes reviewed would be deferred or dropped. As well as the 18 schemes withdrawn from the national programme, a further 19 have been placed in the control of local highway authorities, and it will be up to them, or up to the new Greater London authority, to decide whether to take them forward as local schemes.

In addition, 44 schemes will be considered under the new appraisal method by Mr Reid. They will be reviewed by regional planning conferences as "transport problems requiring broad solutions, not necessarily road solutions".

Richard Diment of the BRF, which represents road-builders, said: "The widening of the M25 is welcome, but the M6 and M1

have exactly the same congestion problems which could be alleviated by widening."

Edmund King, head of campaigns for the RAC, said: "The Government's integrated transport policy is in danger of bypassing roads due to severe cuts to the roads programme."

"The Government must remember that integrated transport includes roads, and buses, cars, cycles and trucks all have to run on the roads."

Among the schemes which have been axed are the A49 Hereford bypass and the M1 J10-J14 widening in Hertfordshire. "Trunk roads have a vital role to play in our transport system - but they cannot be looked at in isolation," said Mr Reid.

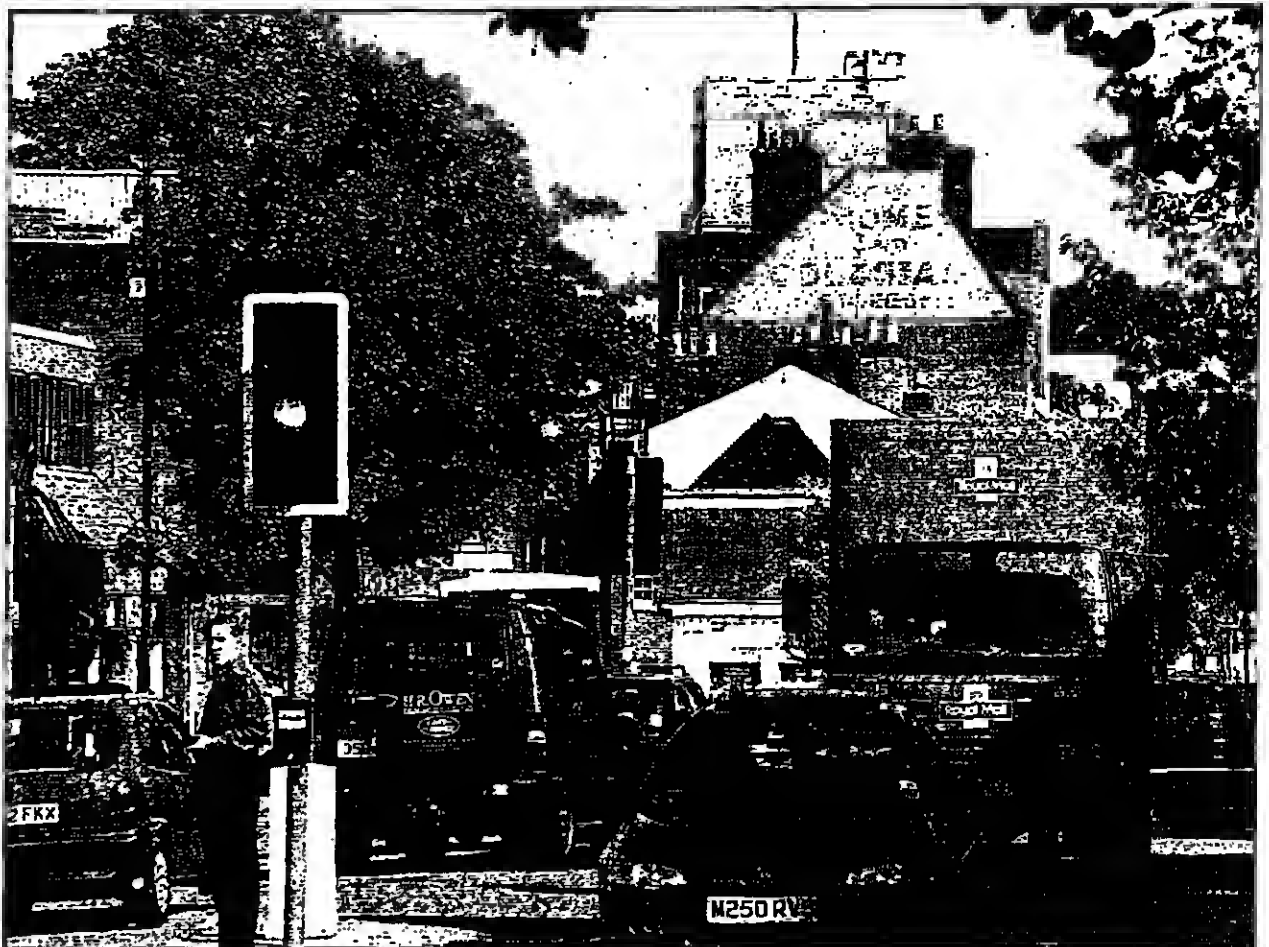
He said the review signalled an end to the old Tory policy of having a "wish list" of road schemes, many of which had no real hope of ever being built.

The Liberal Democrats said some towns and villages needed bypasses and these should have stayed in the programme.



Berkhamsted blossoms with blooms, and bollards, since its bypass was built

Keith Dobney



Bel Mooney's protest before the bypass at Swainswick was built

South West News

Beacon bypass project breathes life into town

WHEN THE bypass around Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire was opened five years ago it halved the amount of traffic in the town centre and drastically reduced the number of road accidents.

The prosperous commuter heartland and former market town was one of six places to benefit from an initiative by the last government to invest in bypasses whilst simultaneously developing the road system within the town centre.

Adequate provision was made for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users, so that other towns and villages could learn how to avoid being overwhelmed by in-

By LINUS GREGORIADIS

creased local traffic when their bypasses were built.

The other six towns selected to participate in the "Bypass Demonstration Project" were Delton-in-Furness in Cumbria, Whiteburch in Shropshire, Market Harborough in Leicestershire, Wadebridge in Cornwall and Petersfield in Hampshire.

The British Roads Federation, the pro-roads lobby, backed the initiative and said that bypasses generated more economic benefits than was generally realised.

Rob Smith, head of sustainable transport projects at Hert-

fordshire County Council, said yesterday that Berkhamsted's bypass had been a great success.

"It gave us an opportunity to redistribute the road space in favour of shoppers. It took the space away from the car and lorry."

"The Government put in about £1m and the county council and the borough put in another £1m to improve the road layout. It has brought quite a change in the environment. It also cut the amount of accidents by half."

Mr Smith added: "The perception is that the bypass and the other work have breathed life back into the town. There

are more visitors coming into the shops. The town is definitely thriving and it has been helped by the bypass."

Ron Cowie, chairman of Berkhamsted and District Chamber of Commerce, said that traffic had gradually increased since the bypass was opened in autumn, 1993.

He said: "Since the bypass was built the traffic is not as bad as it was but a lot of traffic has come back. Shortly after it was opened a new Waitrose opened."

"The bypass has improved communications with other towns and that may have been one of the reasons why we have more office premises and light industrial premises."

... but village finds fewer cars mean higher speeds

THE BYPASS of Batheaston and Swainswick in Avon has been condemned because of a failure to introduce effective traffic-calming measures in Batheaston's town centre.

The £75m stretch of road made the headlines before it was opened two years ago when Bel Mooney, the author and wife of Jonathan Dimbleby, joined the campaigners protesting against the development.

In 1994 she went on an eight-day fast to protest against the 2.5-mile bypass cutting through an Iron Age fort near the couple's home at Swainswick.

Supporters of the new road, which cost £75m, say it has re-

duced traffic and pollution in the places it bypasses.

The Department of Transport claimed that it was "set to improve the lives of thousands of local people" and that there would be "far fewer lorries thundering past their doorsteps, a much better environment to live in and the chance to recapture some of the tranquillity that has been so sorely lacking in recent years".

It was hailed as a quicker route for motorists commuting to and from Bath.

However, many people in Batheaston continue to complain about the traffic in the

High Street because the remaining motorists exploit the freedom to drive more quickly in the absence of successful traffic-calming measures.

Rebecca Wilcox, who has lived in the town for 25 years, said yesterday: "There has been some traffic calming but there is a terrible problem with speeding. We don't have so many lorries now but the cars which still drive through the town go much faster. It used to be one long traffic jam."

She added: "I think sleeping policemen might work better than the chicanes that have been introduced. They have increased the amount of parking allowed on the road to slow

things down but it hasn't made a lot of difference."

People in nearby Bathampton say there has been an increase in traffic there, caused by motorists trying to avoid congestion caused by the bypass.

"In peak periods there can be a 45-minute wait for traffic trying to get on to the new western bypass roundabout," Ms Wilcox said.

But she added: "Just about everyone who lives on the Bathampton Road wanted the bypass. The situation was intolerable, with lorries going right past people's front doors. Before it was built two old ladies were killed and children were always getting knocked over."

Nurse disciplined for dispensing drugs

UNION LEADERS are seeking an urgent meeting with the Department of Health after a nurse was disciplined for administering drugs.

The public service union Unison says that Susan Shine, 35, an occupational health nurse who worked for Cleveland police authority, was providing medicines in the same way as "tens of thousands" of her colleagues every day all over the country.

While there is a degree of latitude over nurses' use of drugs, there is considerable confusion over what is allowed.

The United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (UKCC) "cautioned" Ms Shine for giving vaccinations, antibiotics and painkillers to police officers, despite a decision by the Crown Prosecution Service that a prosecution would not have been "in the public interest".

By BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

Unison wants a meeting with Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health, in an attempt to clear up the confusion.

Bob Abberley, head of health at the union, said that unless the situation was clarified, his organisation would advise its nursing members to refuse to administer medicines without the authority of a doctor. The union is also considering legal action against the authority.

If nurses refused to prescribe drugs it could lead to problems in key areas of public health when nursing staff are often forced to operate without the supervision of doctors.

Mr Abberley claimed the reference to the UKCC, a statutory professional body, had followed a complaint of sexual discrimination by Ms Shine. The union official said that

Ms Shine had vaccinated police officers against hepatitis B after they were bitten by suspects and had also administered painkillers to patients.

"There is no question that she is a first-class nurse and there has never been any ill-effects from her work. It is custom and practice all over the country for nursing staff to administer the kind of drugs prescribed by Ms Shine."

A spokesman for the UKCC said that only nurses with special training or in designated areas were allowed to give certain medicines and Ms Shine was in neither category.

The Royal College of Nursing said that technically the body was correct but the law had not caught up with nursing practice. Although the "caution" would stay on her record for five years, it was the most lenient penalty open to the UKCC.

TV broadcasts of police raids are attacked by judge

THE GROWING practice of the media being invited to attend police raids during crime investigations and immediately broadcasting what they have seen was strongly criticised in the High Court yesterday.

A judge called for new Home Office guidance to police forces on relations between police and the media as he gave judgment in the case of a London shop-owner who protested that he was "humiliated on television" during a search for illegally held stuffed animals.

Lord Justice Rose said that "save in exceptional circumstances" it did not seem to him to be in the public interest for procedures such as the execution of search warrants and interviews of suspects that might involve innocent people to be published in the media immediately.

He added: "For my part, I

By JOHN ASTON

would deplore a general practice by any police force of inviting the media along to be present when investigative procedures are being undertaken."

Despite the criticism, Lord Justice Rose, sitting in London with Mr Justice Bell, dismissed an application for judicial review by Robert Sclaire, who protested over his ordeal when his shop Get Stuffed, in Islington, north London, was raided in March.

Up to 30 police officers, accompanied by reporters, a television crew, officials from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and campaigners against the trade in wild animals, were involved in the raid.

The judges ruled that although the raid caused them some disquiet, there was no illegality or impropriety.

Eight jailed after three decades of sex abuse

EIGHT PEOPLE - including four members of the same family - were yesterday jailed for their part in a sex abuse ring in the West Country which remained undiscovered for more than three decades.

In what is believed to be the largest number of offences by one family ever brought to court, nine people were convicted of a total of 79 charges of rape, indecent assault and serious sexual offences between 1961 and 1995. One was given a suspended sentence.

Both children and grandchildren were abused, and Judge William Taylor told the packed Crown Court that what took place over 35 years was "wickedness beyond belief."

The sentencing included the grandparents of the family, two of their sons and one daughter as well as her husband, one of the sons' wives, a male cousin and an elderly neighbour.

By GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

The judge jailed the grandfather of the family for 25 years, telling him he had "dragged" his wife and family into abuse.

His wife was jailed for a total of 14 years by Judge Taylor who told her she had "totally abdicated" her responsibility as a mother because she had known from the beginning what her husband was doing to their children.

The grandparents had had seven children - three sons and four daughters. "You corrupted each in turn," the judge told the couple. The children were encouraged or forced to abuse each other, and other family members, neighbours and friends were invited to "use" them.

Police investigations first began into suspicions of abuse in 1992, but there was insuffi-

cient evidence to bring charges. The abusers were finally brought to the dock in 1996 when more information came to light.

The couple's son-in-law was jailed for 18 years and his wife, was sentenced to two years, sentence suspended for two years, after admitting a charge of rape involving her daughter.

Two of the grandparents' three sons also appeared in the dock. One was convicted of offences involving his two daughters and two nieces and jailed for 14 years. His wife was jailed for five years. The other son, who had also been abused, was convicted of one offence of raping one of his sisters at knife-point when he was 16, and was jailed for three years.

The others who were jailed included an elderly neighbour of the family jailed for 16 years and a male cousin jailed for five years.



President Clinton at the inauguration of North Carolina's New River as an "American Heritage" River

Presidency hits a new ratings low

THE WHITE House spin machine went into action yesterday to counter the revelation that "that dress" had been sent to FBI laboratories to be tested for semen stains.

The sordid nature of the allegations, however, and the implicit confirmation that the dress - which has been at the centre of rumour and innuendo since January - does really exist, plunged the standing of the US Presidency, even in the eyes of liberal commentators, to one of its lowest points on record.

There was speculation that the luck of the man who described himself recently as "the luckiest man on earth" might finally be running out. Is Bill Clinton - a President so gifted, but oh so flawed - finally cornered?

An older, perhaps wiser, Monica Lewinsky, just turned 25, is talking about what she told her friend Linda Tripp was an 18-month affair conducted in

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

the precincts of the Oval Office. The independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, is now in possession of highly damaging evidence, including the dress. How can the great escape artist possibly get out of this?

Mr Clinton is on record as denying a sexual affair. He denied it in his sworn testimony in the Paula Jones sexual harassment suit and he denied it again in his "I did not have sexual relations with that woman" statement. The questioning in the Paula Jones case went to great lengths to clarify exactly what Mr Clinton was denying, and this included oral sex.

The line of questioning was believed to stem from reports that Mr Clinton drew a distinction between oral sex and sexual intercourse for personal moral purposes. His denials in the Paula Jones case appear

to have closed that escape route.

If the dress tests negative and Mr Clinton persists with his outright denials, it is possible that the investigation ends in stalemate: a "he said/she said" dispute, where the circumstantial evidence confirms Ms Lewinsky's version, but nothing clinches the argument absolutely. Then, Mr Clinton may well be off the hook, tarnished, but - as so often - off the hook.

If the tests and a DNA test on a Clinton hair prove the worst, though, then what? Washington punditry suggests that Mr Clinton might well decide to throw himself on the mercy of the American people.

That would entail an admission that when he gave evidence under oath in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case, he committed perjury, and that his televised denial was also false. He could announce his resignation, but past evidence

suggests that Mr Clinton is not a quitter.

However, past evidence also shows that Mr Clinton is a master of the non-lie: the smoking but not inhaling, the near draft-dodging, the semi-speaking with Jennifer Flowers. It must be possible that, strictly speaking, his sworn and public denials are true: that he did not have either intercourse or oral sex with Ms Lewinsky, that they fooled around, that things went pretty far, but not that far. In that event, the legal case against him must be doubtful. He did not commit perjury. He observed the letter (if not the spirit) of the law.

The political case, however, will be for American voters and the Democratic Party to decide. When all is known, of what is a complicated story, Americans might well prefer to forgive a sinner who genuinely repents than one who pulled a legal trick on them.

How Clinton got through a long week

Friday, 24 July

President Bill Clinton, his wife, daughter and dog set off for quiet weekend at the presidential retreat of Camp David in the Maryland hills.

As they depart, the White House spokesman, Mike McCurry, discloses that lawyers for Mr Clinton and the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, have been discussing the possibility that Mr Clinton might testify in the Monica Lewinsky inquiry.

No sooner have the Clintons arrived at Camp David than news breaks of a shooting inside the Capitol. Two police have been shot dead, the presumed gunman is in hospital.

BY MARY DEJEVSKY

presidential subpoena, now confirmed by Mr Starr's office, but not by the White House.

Monday, 27 July
Mr Clinton in New Mexico for forum on state pensions.

His friend and deputy White House counsel loses claim that his conversations with Mr Clinton are covered by lawyer-client confidentiality and must testify in Monica Lewinsky case.

Reports confirmed that Ms Lewinsky has concluded meeting with prosecutors about immunity deal.

Tuesday, 28 July
Mr Clinton delivers oration at Capitol memorial service for dead policeman.

Ms Lewinsky's lawyers announce that she has reached agreement with prosecutors: she will give "full and truthful" testimony to the grand jury in return for full immunity from prosecution.

Wednesday, 29 July
Mr Clinton and his wife, Hillary, address separate meetings at the White House: he on education, she on combating breast cancer. Mr Clinton's lawyer announces that the President will testify voluntarily to the grand jury on videotape. This decision allows the subpoena to be withdrawn. He will answer questions from the White House on Monday, 17 August, just before he goes on holiday. The White House confirms for the first time that a subpoena was served - on 17 July.

Linda Tripp, the woman who taped Ms Lewinsky's confessions, completes eight days of evidence before the grand jury.

Thursday, 30 July
Mr Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore go to North Carolina to launch "save rivers" environmental project. First Capitol policeman buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

The prosecutor's office confirms that it is in possession of "that dress" and has sent it to FBI laboratories to be tested for semen stains. Media reports Ms Lewinsky has handed over tapes with messages from Mr Clinton from her answer-machine.

Friday, 31 July
Business as usual: Mr Clinton answers questions about the second quarter GDP figures, then departs for fund-raising weekend in the Hamptons.

Second policeman buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Clinton camp tries to minimise damage, friendly lawyers say the dress has no stains and the telephone messages are nothing special.



Linda Tripp testifies for eight days before grand jury, and Kenneth Starr subpoenas President



Mr Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore go to North Carolina to launch "save rivers" environmental project.

Clinton camp tries to minimise damage, friendly lawyers say the dress has no stains and the telephone messages are nothing special.

Saturday, 25 July
Day of heartsearching and mourning in Washington following the shootings.

Clinton's hold surprise birthday party for President's brother at Camp David.

Late evening reports, subsequently confirmed by prosecutor's office, that Mr Clinton has been subpoenaed to give evidence in the Lewinsky case: he is first incumbent president to be required to testify to a grand jury in his own defence.

Sunday, 26 July
Television talkshows mull over the Capitol shootings and the

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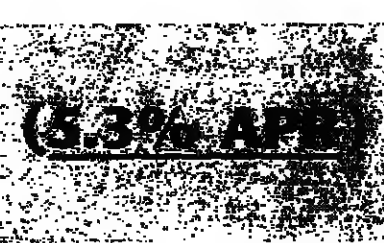
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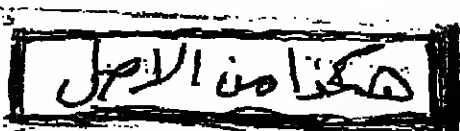
STEVE CONNOR

The pig is just not self aware enough to suffer pain in the same way as primates and humans.

— THE WEEKEND REVIEW, PAGE 5



YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.





Children playing in filthy water in the streets of Saddam City

Tom Stoddart/Katz

Sanctions reduce Baghdad to ruins

AT THE end of the Second World War the allies were astonished to discover that the animals in Berlin zoo were all svelte and healthy, having received their exotic diets throughout the conflict. They concluded that strategic bombing was less successful in disrupting the German economy than they had expected.

Eight years of sanctions against Iraq have proved far more effective. Anz and Suker, the two lions in Baghdad zoo, died in 1993 and 1996. Dr Adel Salman, the director of the zoo, set in a sun-baked park in the centre of the city says they died "of malnutrition and diseases we couldn't treat".

Only one big cat, a four-year-old Bengal tiger named Malloh, remains in the zoo, living on a diet of donkey meat bought in the local market. He does not look happy. He crouch-

BY PATRICK COCKBURN
in Baghdad

es close to an ageing air-conditioner in a stable at the back of his cage to escape the torrid heat of summer in Baghdad, where yesterday temperatures were close to 50 degrees centigrade.

Dr Salman, a former army officer with greying hair who has run Baghdad zoo, little frequented by Iraqis, for nine years, explains his difficulties as he struggles to keep his animals alive. Whatever expedients are tried, resources are not enough. There are bananas and apples available in the shops for the monkey but they are too expensive, he says. "We feed them vegetables instead."

Everywhere Iraq is full of people just failing to make do. Eight years of sanctions have proved far more devastating for

Iraq than three years of strategic bombing for Germany. The damage is cumulative. Prohibited from exporting oil except under UN control, Iraq has built no new power stations or water or sewage plants since 1990. It has not been able to buy spare parts for the old ones, which are increasingly obsolete.

Denis Halliday, the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator for Iraq, resigned this month in apparent frustration at his inability to persuade the UN that the Iraqi infrastructure is collapsing. In an interview earlier in the year he said: "Electricity is 40 per cent of what it used to be. We have estimated that we need \$10 billion and we are putting in \$300 million."

What this means for ordinary Iraqis can be seen in the sweltering ward at the 335-bed Saddam Children's hospital in central Baghdad. The UN recently allowed in 10 incubators for babies. They are computer controlled and made in Japan but their manufacturers had apparently not imagined that they would be expected to function in temperatures which are well over 40 degrees centigrade because the hospital's air conditioning barely functions. As a result the sick and premature babies are placed in the incubators but their doors have to stay open because of the heat.

Far more is needed than food and drugs. The hospital has six Italian-made lifts but yesterday only one was working. Many of the patients are suffering from malnutrition. Dr Qais Muhsin points to two-month-old Hanan Ahmed lying on a bed being fanned by his grandmother and says: "He has rickets or calcium deficiency. That is the first thing we look for in infants these days."

The malnutrition is not just because of lack of food. Despite food supplies deliveries to Iraq under the oil-for-food plan signed in 1996, a quarter of all Iraqis under five are malnourished according to a Unicef report last year. A reason for this is what Lockton Morrissey, the

regional director of Care International, says is "the abominable state of the water supply and the collapse of the sewage system." Children, who are already malnourished get gastroenteritis and die.

A heatwave this summer, severe even by the standards of the Mesopotamian plain, has made Iraqis deeply conscious of how far their infrastructure has declined.

Dr Muhsin says: "The heat provides an excellent medium for bacteria to flourish. It makes the rivers more contaminated but people have to drink straight from the river because they are thirsty and there is no alternative."

Not everybody in Iraq is sick. Society still functions, though at a more primitive level than before. There is construction activity, particularly in the shopping streets in Baghdad. An Iraqi economist says: "It is cheap to build because you only have to pay a labourer the equivalent of \$1.50 (\$1p) a day."

There are even Iraqis who have not suffered from sanctions. These are mostly farmers. Restaurants are full of men wearing traditional robes or dishdashas, who come from the country.

"The hotels are full of farmers," says the same economist, who did not want to give his name. "People who drive cars imported since sanctions almost certainly made their money in agriculture." Ever since the embargo was imposed in 1990 the government has kept the real price of wheat at the equivalent of about \$100 a tonne.

Overall, Iraqis have a deep sense of bitterness. They feel that sanctions are designed to keep Iraq weak and not because the US or Britain is really frightened of such Iraqi weapons of mass destruction as may remain.

"Sanctions hit the people not the government," said one Iraqi friend. "We are being punished worse than the Nazis who killed 15 million people and we don't deserve it."

The TRV9 digital camcorder with nightshot

Nightshot is a feature that lets you film when there's absolutely no light. The images are recorded digitally and viewed on a 5.5-inch LCD screen. The TRV9 also has Stamina technology which lets you record for longer. To see to the dark, see your Sony dealer.



Swiss Jews face backlash over Nazi gold

BY PETER CAPELLA
in Geneva

SWITZERLAND'S Jewish community is cornered. When a Jewish leader in the United States attacks Switzerland's wartime dealings with the Nazis, latent anti-Semitism turns into a flurry of hate mail. Yet most Swiss Jews are now bitterly at odds with their American counterparts.

Earlier this month, the Swiss Democrats, an extreme right-wing party with three seats in parliament, called for a boycott of "American or Jewish" products in response to a threat of sanctions in the United States against two Swiss banks.

Another right-winger, Giuliano Bigasca, faces prosecution after recommending that a member of a commission searching for dormant Holocaust accounts should take a holiday in the "Hotel Buchenwald in Dachau... run by a nice man with a small moustache".

A few days later, Thomas Lyssy, a spokesman for the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities, received an anonymous postcard on the same lines. It is the product of a small minority but for the first time Swiss public figures are flirting with anti-Semitism. Mr Lyssy fears they will not prevent an escalation of hatred. "It gives me the impression they don't

care or that they agree [with it]," he said. Even Swiss Jews are weary of repeated demands from the World Jewish Congress. Michael Kohn, a prominent member of the Swiss community, was forced to step down as vice-president of the European congress after he warned that the organisation was losing its honour. Money, he said, was replacing morality.

Until recently the banks were unpopular in Switzerland. A combination of mergers, job cuts, huge profits and the Holocaust issue annoyed many Swiss. Publication of lists of dormant accounts, as well as reports on Nazi gold deals by a special commission of experts, helped them swallow some unpalatable truths about their country's past.

The WJC is backing lawsuits in New York by thousands of Holocaust victims and their heirs, demanding compensation from the two largest commercial banks. Union Bank of Switzerland and Credit Suisse offered \$600m out-of-court on top of the dormant accounts in their vaults. Lawyers and Jewish groups are demanding about twice as much.

UN probe in Algeria

A UN human rights monitoring body called yesterday for an independent investigation into the actions of the security forces during massacres in Algeria.

Despite hearing evidence from the Algerian government, which rejected any involvement in massacres, torture and disappearances, the UN Human Rights Committee concluded that it was turning a blind eye to its responsibilities under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The rebuke came as Algiers

is trying to convince a visiting UN fact-finding mission that it is open to scrutiny. The committee's chief concern was the lack of investigation into disappearances and massacres, which the Algerians claimed they conducted regardless of who might be responsible.

Although it stopped short of blaming the government for some of the abuse or of lying, the Committee clearly felt the Algerians were being economical with the truth.



Joyce Seipei, left, mother of murdered teenage activist Stompie Seipei, is hugged by Winnie Madikizela-Mandela at a Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing in Johannesburg. Madikizela-Mandela was convicted on charges of kidnapping Stompie. Witnesses claimed she stabbed him. AP

Ugly memories of brave experiment

TWO YEARS of truth and reconciliation, designed to put decades of apartheid-era brutality to some kind of rest, came to an end yesterday.

As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission turned its attention to a report - in effect an official history of the apartheid years - to be presented to President Nelson Mandela later this year, the political row over the achievements of Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Commission is intensifying.

But for many, the political controversy will overtake the voices of hundreds of victims who told their stories to the TRC, or the voices of perpetrators who murdered and tortured in the state's name.

So many scenes crowd the mind, breathing a terrible life into the bland term "gross human rights abuses". They make a mockery of the view, cherished by former president P W Botha, who defied a subpoena to appear before the Commission, that apartheid was simply "good neighbourliness".

Phila Ndawande, a plastic shopping bag tied round her pelvis, challenged that last year from the grave. "She was brave this one," said a former apartheid security policeman after leading TRC investigators to her body. That young ANC activist had been tortured naked for 10 days. The bag was her attempt to retain some dignity.

Like all the perpetrators of abuses, Phila's killers were offered amnesty in return for full disclosure. For many blacks, including the widow of the murdered leader Steve Biko, that trade-off amounted to a deal with the devil. So harrowing were the stories that even the TRC's ardent supporters sympathise with the Biko view. Even TRC investigators complained that little truth was uncovered in return for indemnity.

If the victims' tears helped dampen apartheid, so did the matter of fact confessions of the torturers and killers. Few words were as chilling as the body-burning tips offered by Dirk Coetzee, former com-

BY MARY BRAID

mander of Vlakplaas, headquarters of the assassination squads, or his tales of police boozing and braising (barbecuing) while the bodies of black activists roasted beside them.

Equally chilling was the demonstration to the TRC by a police torturer, Captain Jeffrey Benzien, of the "wet bag" method. Who could forget the fleshy Mr Benzien sitting astride his former victim, Tony Yengeni, and placing the bag over his head? Or Mr Benzien's humiliation of Mr Yengeni, now an ANC MP, when he asked what kind of human being could take another to the point of suffocation? Mr Benzien asked Mr Yengeni to recall how effective the method had been, and how quickly he had betrayed his comrades as a result.

The gross revelations over

let up. In June, Wouter Basson and other scientists, revealed that South Africa's research centres investigated methods of curbing black fertility and developing bacteria harmful only to blacks.

For many, including TRC chairman, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the greatest frustration was the National Party's refusal to accept responsibility for atrocities. When South Africa's last white president, F W de Klerk, made his party's submission to the Commission, he denied ministers either knew of, or sanctioned, violence. Mavericks were responsible. Archbishop Tutu was on the verge of tears.

One of the TRC's greatest failures was its inability to trace the chain of command to the National Party cabinet. The foot soldiers complain that former ministers have walked away free.

Nothing in South Africa divides absolutely along colour lines. But the TRC hearings were mainly a black affair. Few whites came to listen, despite Archbishop Tutu's pleas that they accept some responsibility for the horrors of the past. Despite all the evidence, right-wing Afrikaners continue to insist that what took place was a war against Communism in which there was no moral difference between the liberation struggle and the apartheid machine.

Yesterday cynics denounced the TRC for increasing racial divisions. Cynicism was a feature from the start. Few, if any, perpetrators came forward because of their consciences. Like Adriaan Flok, the former law and order minister, and the only member of cabinet to apply for amnesty, they had usually been implicated in previous hearings.

The most cynical public manipulation was surely Winnie Madikizela-Mandela's refusal to accept any responsibility for the reign of terror in Soweto in the late Eighties conducted by her notorious bodyguards. Despite being implicated in murders, her hearings ended with a sickening, manufactured reconciliation with the mother of a murdered child activist, whom witnesses alleged Mrs Mandela had stabbed.

It was the low-point for the credibility of the TRC and Archbishop Tutu, but without his humour and his belief - despite all the evidence - in the essential goodness of mankind, the TRC might have collapsed.

The TRC has been a brave experiment, and far from perfect but even critics are lost when asked what they would have put in its place. It was part of a huge political compromise. The alternative was war.

Yesterday many were praying that the TRC had created some consensus about the past. It will be vital for South Africa's next stage: the drive to end economic inequality which Thabo Mbeki, president in waiting, insists is crucial for any meaningful long-term reconciliation.

THE CRUCIAL MOMENTS



Jeffrey Benzien demonstrates the "wet bag" torture method, left. Bishop Desmond Tutu wipes his face during the Stompie hearing, top, and Wouter Basson, right, testified about the use of chemical weapons against blacks. Reuters

21,000 victims give evidence — but have they got justice?

IT COULD never have been a Nuremberg. To sustain the moral righteousness of a war-crimes tribunal requires a victor and vanquished. But South Africa, like Northern Ireland, admits of no such clarity.

A Truth and Reconciliation Commission seemed a masterly solution to a situation where - after the historic alliance elections in 1994 brought apartheid to an end - the demands of justice had to be balanced against the need to avoid provoking a violent backlash from one section of the still-divided community. But four years on, has it been a success? It was not a new idea. Truth missions were established throughout the past decade in El Salvador and other Latin American countries where man-rights violations had an endemic under right-wing

BY PAUL VALLELY

or military dictatorships. They were empowered to grant amnesty to criminals who made a full confession to crimes which they could prove were politically motivated. No remorse was necessary.

Inevitably this set up a tension with the requirements of justice and the needs of retribution. Critics have seen the South African commission as a soft option. The language of reconciliation has seemed otherworldly and idealistic, an impression reinforced by the fact that its chairman was Archbishop Desmond Tutu, whose manner has been at times a little too ironic, especially in the face of the brazen denials of Winnie Mandela.

Certainly many of the families of the thousands who suf-

fered grievously under apartheid felt they were being cheated of justice. Some, like the family of Steve Biko, went so far as to oppose the applications for amnesty by their relatives' killers and torturers.

And it is true that in a number of the high-profile cases, such as those of Winnie Mandela and P W Botha, the commission seemed impotent.

Yet of the 7,000 applications for amnesty only 125 have so far been granted. The rest were unable to convince the commission that they were telling the whole truth. Court cases will follow in many instances.

There was more to all this than merely asking the families of victims to forego all individual satisfaction as a sacrifice for the common good. Apartheid was a structural injustice. Millions were cruelly exploited,

robbed of their land, forcibly removed into abject housing and subjected to gross discrimination in education. Some structural response was necessary.

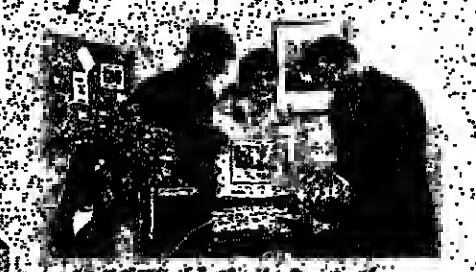
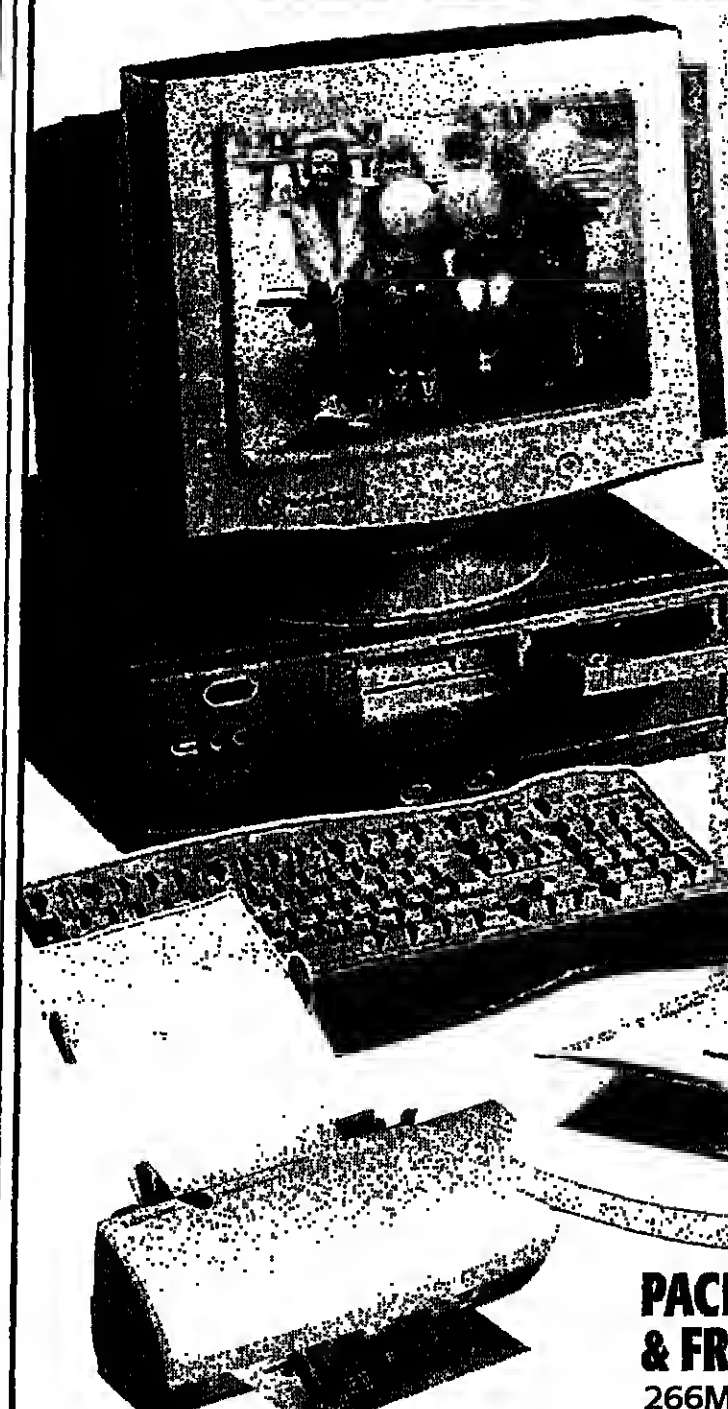
Since 1996 the commission has heard or read reports from 21,000 victims of abuse during white minority rule. It has allowed ordinary people to describe in public their suffering and humiliation at the hands of the state. Complicity in the government terror has been revealed as rising to the highest levels. Families have at last learnt the truth about what happened to loved ones, allowing them to pass into a different stage in their mourning and grief.

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Heirs of Ghenghis Khan ride the steppes again



Tsengal, a truck driver, with one of 11 horses he has brought to the Naadam sports festival. Teresa Poole

IN MONGOLIA, where horses outnumber people, the skills of a good horseman demand respect. So when Tsengal set out to train a stallion for this summer's traditional Naadam festival, he embarked upon the enterprise with the determination of a Mongol warrior.

Naadam is one of the world's great sporting spectacles, as Mongolians ride in from far-flung provinces for a weekend of horse-racing, wrestling and archery on the grasslands outside the capital, Ulan Bator.

By dawn on the first day, the total number of horses on the dusty plain is in the tens of thousands. In the early-morning light, as men in Mongolian dress herd the animals down to the river for water, it is as if Ghenghis Khan's army is on the move again.

This year, Tsengal, 40, brought 11 horses to Naadam, but the main hope was for the 25km stallion race. Hundreds of horses compete in each event, ridden by children, some as young as four years old. The horses gallop out across the grasslands to a marker, and then back to the finish.

It is not without risk; at least six horses have just died in this year's Naadam.

"I'm a truck driver, but my hobby is training horses," said Tsengal, sitting in his circular ger tent wearing a rich purple tunic and a leather hat. Most years he competes at Naadam, journeying the 45 miles from his home in the province of Tuv, where his extended family keeps 100 horses and 500 livestock.

"It is really tiring, because for one month the person and the horse are really close, like a sportsman and trainer," he said.

In the first few days, the horse is taken from the herd and ridden around the tent. Day by day, he goes longer distances.

"We ride the horse with a thick blanket on, so the dusty sweat comes out, and we clean it off. The number of times needed to sweat the horse depends on the age and the weight. Some horses need twice a day, others five or six

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF TSENGAL, MONGOL HORSEMAN



times." The Sunday before the race, Tsengal's horses ran well in a local race. "Not all horses can do big competitions. It depends on the shape and condition of the horse, and the eyesight. The distance between the two back legs should be wide, and the nostrils big, so he can have big breaths, and the hoof shape is special. Maybe to ordinary people, the horse is ugly."

The jockey was also in final training. Tsengal's 11-year-old nephew, Gariderdene, was riding the stallion.

"We prepare kids to ride from an early age. From when they start walking, they start riding on a baby goat, sheep or calf. At four years old, they ride a quiet horse. Then they graduate to a stronger horse," said Tsengal.

ON MONDAY, Tsengal and his brother-in-law packed a small ger and prepared for the journey to Ulan Bator. His wife and other relatives were staying behind to look after the animals.

"Before 1990, I worked for a state skin-processing factory, delivering the skins to the factory." When the Communist system collapsed after 70 years as a Soviet satellite, most small state factories went bankrupt, and people like Tsengal lost their jobs. "I am still a driver, but now I have my own truck and work my own time," he said.

THE 45-MILE journey started at a gentle pace. "We travelled

over several days so as not to tire the horses or disrupt the final training. We brought the tent and food by car, but the horses came by foot.

"This year I found out that some families came to Naadam from up to 500 miles away. This is the highest horse competition in Mongolia. So the first 50 horses finishing are the really fast ones."

On the first night they pitched camp after just 20 miles. "We rode the horses hard for only a third of a mile, so they didn't get stiff."

THE NEXT day brought the group another 20 miles on, to a quiet site a few miles from the Naadam plain.

"We camped here for two nights, because there are so many horses and people at Naadam that the horses cannot sleep. The horses were still a little bit fat, so I let them go and sweat and cleaned them. I did not ride them."

"The older horses are used to horse-racing, and the younger ones follow them, so they don't run away. Stallions usually have harems, but on the road we just take one female for them so that the male horse does not run off."

"Usually the horses eat during the night time and get full. If people then ride them, they shit. We did this a few times here to make them go to the toilet. You can see the difference between a horse that is prepared for racing, their stomachs are much smaller."

THURSDAY BROUGHT the last long run for Tsengal's horses before the big day. A 10-mile race gave him an idea of likely performance.

"I thought the stallion would be a good horse. I had no doubts. The other horses I felt had not had enough time for training."

The young jockey started to get pre-race jitters. "Yes, he's been really nervous. But he has been riding in Naadam for four years, since he was eight," said Tsengal.

THE HORSES wake after a good sleep. The party travelled the final few miles to the Naadam site, and met up with relatives from Ulan Bator. The relatives brought a large ger for everyone to sleep in.

"I registered the horses and got numbers for the riders. Friday night, we did not sleep all night. We had to feed the horses and ride them around to shit. But we also had to watch the horses. There were too many horses around, and sometimes people swap or steal the horses. We had to be careful. We had to watch they did not run away and mix with others."

SATURDAY - the big day. At 4am, we took the horses to drink water down by the river. Then let the horses sleep. It is traditional to make the horse good-looking, by decorating the mane and tail. And a ladle of *airuk* fermented mare's milk on the horse's flank brings good luck. At 8am, Tsengal took his stallion and young rider to the start, where more than 500 stallions were lined up to race. On the way, the mounted horses all circled a small rotunda three times, singing to soothe the horses.

Once the race started, Tsengal returned to his ger for a quick breakfast. Theo down to the finishing line, and a tense wait.

"It's a really difficult feeling. Everybody, when they come, wishes their horse wins. But that's not really important. There are so many horses and kids, you just want the horse and the kid to come back safely. The horses are really clever animals, they never step on the kids if they fall off."

Tsengal's stallion and nephew rode without mishap - in 22nd place. It was Tsengal's best-ever position. "It's a tremendous result," he said, with a face-splitting grin. "I'm really pleased."

The vodka flowed that afternoon in the ger.

And any reward for the brave young jockey? "I will give him a really fast horse," promised Tsengal.

TERESA POOLE



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Peking party boss is jailed for corruption

IN THE most politically-charged corruption case in China, the former Peking Communist party boss was sentenced yesterday to 16 years in jail.

Chen Xitong, by far the most senior official to be punished in China's five-year campaign against graft, was found guilty of embezzlement, accepting gifts, and dereliction of duty.

Mr Chen, "in pursuit of a corrupt and decadent life", had diverted public funds to build "two luxurious villas" where he indulged in "extravagant dining, dining and personal entertainment... and pleasure-seeking", the verdict said.

Previous reports have stated Mr Chen's illicit assets as £24m in cash plus a string of villas and apartments, which he liberally provided to relatives, mistresses and friends. Yesterday's judgment mentioned only a few offences, presumably because a full account might prove too explosive.

The judges found that between 1991 and 1994 he had misappropriated 22 gifts, valued at 555,000 yuan (£42,000) which had been given by un-named "foreign parties". "Among these items were eight gold and silver products, six deluxe watches, four expensive pens, three cameras and one video camera," said the official court report. Total spending on the villas amounted to 38.68m yuan (£3m). Lower-ranking officials have been executed for far less.

The scandal erupted more than three years ago, when one of the city's deputy mayors, Wang Baosen, committed suicide as the corruption investigation closed in. The court judgment said Mr Chen "conspired" with Mr Wang to embezzle funds for the villas.

The political sensitivity of the case left ordinary Pekingers sceptical over whether 68-year-old Mr Chen would ever receive serious punishment. As well as having powerful friends, his case posed questions about

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

other senior officials who had their fingers in the pie. Zhang Sijing, China's procurator-general, said that between 1993-97 some 181,873 officials were prosecuted for embezzlement, bribery and dereliction of duty. But this included only 265 at or above prefecture level, though it is the senior cadres who have greatest opportunity for graft.

Mr Chen is one of the most unpopular politicians in the capital, because of his zealous support in June 1989 for the bloody shooting of the pro-democracy demonstrators.

Mr Liu, 44, a driver, said: "The sentence should have come earlier. People do not like him, and now the result comes we feel relieved."

An old man added: "In Mao's time, if you committed corruption, you died. But now it is different and there is so much corruption."

Mr Chen's trial took place, in camera, on 20 July.

In his 12 years as mayor and then party secretary for Peking, he presided over a top-level municipal administration which is believed to have siphoned off nearly 1800 yuan (£1.4bn). The scale of the cor-

ruption, which included huge kick-backs from Peking's building programme in the early 1990s, was such that it must have been obvious to central government. But it was not until April 1995 that Mr Chen was suddenly sacked as Peking party chief, in a move which was as much about politics as crime.

As a Politburo member, Mr Chen was well-positioned among the hardline faction in the top leadership, and was seen as an opponent of President Jiang Zemin. His removal in 1995 was useful to Mr Jiang, as a popular measure to show the country that the government was serious about tackling corruption, and as a way of asserting the president's political clout.

Yesterday's long sentence, which came just three weeks after Mr Chen was formally charged, suggests that President Jiang is feeling confident. The President also knows the sentence will please ordinary Chinese.

The conviction by the Peking Municipal Higher People's Court was announced yesterday morning on national television, 3000 after the verdict. There is no way of knowing whether Mr Chen will actually serve his time in prison, or live

fairly comfortably under house arrest.

The sentence comprised 13 years' imprisonment for corruption and four years for dereliction of duty. The total term to be served was 16 years, however. The judge also ordered that the former party boss's bribes should be confiscated. Mr Chen has 10 days to appeal, but it is a foregone conclusion that such a move would not succeed.

The sentence was harsher than had been expected for Mr Chen, but lenient compared with the thousands who have been executed for far less serious economic crimes in the anti-graft crackdown. Senior politicians and ordinary Chinese are not equal before the law, even when a political point is being made. Another Mr Chen, Chen Zhong - for example, was executed two years ago in Sichuan province for attempting to steal VAT receipts from a tax office.

Mr Chen's sentence looks light compared with some of the 30 other Peking officials already sentenced in connection with his web of corruption: Tie Ying, the former director of the Peking Government Legal Affairs Office, which approved business licences and permits, was jailed for 15 years for accepting 430,000 yuan (£32,000) in bribes.

Mr Chen's nearest and dearest profited hugely from their connections. His son, Chen Xiaotong, was jailed for 12 years last year for accepting bribes and "diverting public funds", while his mistress, He Ping, escaped abroad after receiving a reported £3m from Mr Chen.

Mr Chen was purged from the party last autumn, leaving China's more sensational news papers free to speculate about the case. The government permitted such revelations, it drew the line at a novel, *The Wrath of Heaven*, which was thinly disguised run-down of Chen Xitong story.



Former Beijing Mayor, Chen Xitong (centre) under guard while his sentence is read. Fan Ruijun/Reuters

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BUSINESS

Lloyds sets aside £400m
to cover pensions review

BY LEA PATERSON

SHARES IN Lloyds TSB tumbled by more than 7 per cent after the bank said it would put an extra £400m towards the costs of sorting out the pensions mis-selling scandal.

However, analysts said the performance of the bank's core businesses was strong, and that Lloyds continued to add to its stockpile of surplus capital. Sir Brian Pitman, Lloyds chairman, hinted that the bank was building up a "war chest" to help fund future acquisitions. He expected "substantial consolidation" in the industry in 18 months.

The bank said pre-tax profits fell by 11 per cent to £1.28bn in the six months to June. Sir



Sir Brian Pitman: Hints at a Lloyds "war chest"

Brian explained that the headline figure had been distorted by the large pensions provision, a reduced contribution from

emerging market debt and disposals during the year. Before tax, underlying profits rose by 18 per cent to £1.57bn.

Lloyds has put aside £400m to cover the costs of the second stage of the pensions mis-selling review. The Financial Services Authority launched stage two earlier this year to provide financial redress for "non priority" victims of pensions mis-selling. Lloyds has around 165,000 cases to review and estimates it will pay compensation in 45,000 instances.

The bank has already set aside £300m to cover the costs of stage one of the review. Peter Ellwood, Lloyds' chief executive, said the first phase of the work was "on target". Contributions from emerg-

ing markets debt fell from £24m in the first half of 1997 to £28m this half. Another exceptional factor was the profit made on disposals, which came to £84m in the first half of 1998.

Sir Brian said there were signs of a "drift downwards" in credit quality, although there had been "no significant deterioration." Provisions for bad and doubtful debts rose by £5m to £280m, and there was a slight uptick in mortgage arrears.

Mr Ellwood said that, given the economic environment, the bank was keeping a close eye on its new lending business. "We making sure our managers don't pick up other people's rubbish. We're emphasising quality, not quantity." Although Lloyds share fell by

67p to finish the day at 834p, several analysts affirmed their positive rating of the stock.

David Poutney, banking analyst at Panmure Gordon, said: "The markets have been spooked by the pensions provision, and they perhaps underestimated the downturn on LDC (emerging markets) debt."

"However, I think the strength of their core businesses - particularly their mortgage business - is exceptional. History has shown that when Lloyds falls, it is a buying opportunity."

Mr Poutney would be trimming his full-year profit forecasts to reflect the reduced contribution from emerging markets debt.

Sir Brian said Lloyds could

spend some of its surplus capital - estimated at £1.25bn - on acquisitions. "There is significant overcapacity in the UK, and far too much capital. I expect there to be substantial further consolidation."

Mr Ellwood commented: "We are not sitting back waiting for people to come to us."

"In-house, we have a weighty team. Outside, we have one house looking at opportunities for us in Europe and another looking for opportunities elsewhere."

Future acquisitions could include a mortgage provider or a general insurer.

The bank raised the interim dividend by 26 per cent to 6.7p a share.

Outlook, page 17

BRIEFING

Taxpayers to get £100 demands

AROUND 400,000 taxpayers will shortly receive a notice demanding a £100 penalty because have still not filed their tax return for 1996-97 by the time offices closed last night. These are the hard core who missed the deadline last September to file their returns and wait for the taxman to assess their liabilities and then failed to meet the second deadline to submit their forms and calculate and pay their own liability by 31 January. Those who submitted the forms but have not yet paid the tax now face a 5 per cent surcharge on top of the interest at 9.5 per cent they have been paying since the end of January.

Yesterday was also the deadline for over 8m people mainly high rate taxpayers, directors and the self-employed to pay the second instalment of tax due on account for the year to April 1998. The revenue is expecting to net £4.3 billion and unpaid tax starts earning interest at 9.5 per cent a year from today. Earlier last week less than 2m people had paid but many more will have done so at the last minute, the Inland Revenue said yesterday.

Goldberg steps down for soccer



MARK GOLDBERG, the founder of MSB, yesterday stepped down from the board of the IT recruitment company in order to concentrate on Crystal Palace FC, the south London football club of which he is chairman.

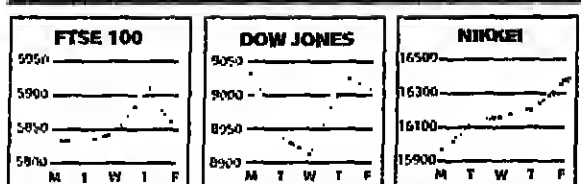
In March, Mr Goldberg relinquished his joint managing director role in favour of a part-time executive role after

investors became increasingly unhappy with his involvement with Crystal Palace. Mr Goldberg has sold a large proportion of his stake in MSB to fund his £22m purchase of the club, which he completed at the beginning of June.

US economic growth slows

US ECONOMIC growth slowed sharply in the second quarter of the year, but the numbers were still stronger than many analysts had been expecting. The US Commerce Department said yesterday that the annualised growth rate of Gross Domestic Product was 1.4 per cent last quarter, the weakest growth rate since the 0.3 per cent seen in the second quarter of 1995. Most Wall Street analysts had expected growth to stagnate or even decline following the lengthy strike against General Motors.

STOCK MARKETS



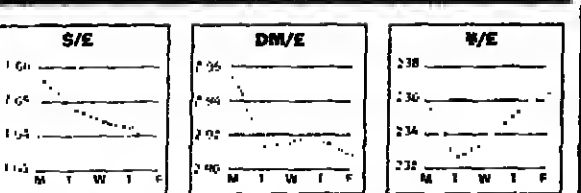
Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5837.00	-58.80	-1.00	6183.70	4382.80	3.72
FTSE 250	5482.70	-3.10	-0.06	5970.90	4426.30	3.53
FTSE 350	2811.80	-25.80	-0.91	2965.10	2141.80	3.73
FTSE All Share	2734.72	-21.40	-0.78	2886.52	2105.59	3.71
FTSE SmallCap	2472.50	-5.10	-0.21	2793.80	2183.90	3.37
FTSE Fledgling	1334.60	-9.00	-0.66	1512.10	1229.20	3.49
FTSE AIM	1063.00	0.00	0.00	1146.90	965.90	1.21
FTSE EBLCC 100	1066.61	-10.75	-1.00			
Dow Jones	9004.30	-42.22	-0.47	9367.84	6971.82	1.63
Nikkei	16378.97	-177.37	-1.10	20399.14	14488.21	0.93
Hang Seng	7936.20	30.04	0.38	16820.31	7351.68	5.15
Dax	5873.92	-6.95	-0.12	6217.83	3487.24	2.74

INTEREST RATES

Short Sterling	UK 10 Year Gilt	US Long Bond
3m	6.0	5.75
6m	5.9	5.6
1y	5.8	5.5
2y	5.7	5.4
3y	5.6	5.3
4y	5.5	5.2
5y	5.4	5.1
7y	5.3	5.0
10y	5.2	4.9

MONEY MARKET RATES					BOND YIELDS				
Index	3 month	Yr Chg	1 Year	Yr Chg	10 year	Yr Chg	Long bond	Yr Chg	
UK	7.76	-0.64	7.61	0.31	5.76	-1.20	5.40	-1.46	
US	5.69	-0.02	5.92	-0.11	5.51	-0.50	5.73	-0.57	
Japan	0.65	0.04	0.67	-0.06	1.55	-0.81	2.10	-0.78	
Germany	3.52	0.34	3.80	0.35	4.63	-0.91	5.26	-0.95	

CURRENCIES



POUND				DOLLAR			
	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago		at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6335	-0.011c	1.6400	Sterling	0.6122	+0.30p	0.6098
D-Mark	2.9079	-0.54p	3.0211	D-Mark	1.7800	+0.56p	1.8411
Yen	236.40	+2.72	194.51	Yen	144.63	+2.14	118.43
E index	104.20	+0.00	105.30	S index	113.50	0.00	105.80

OTHER INDICATORS

	Close	Chg	Yr Ago		Index	Chg	Yr Ago	Next Sign
Brent Oil (\$)	12.60	-0.04	19.12	GDP	115.40	2.60	112.48	Aug
Gold (\$)	288.55	-0.65	324.75	RPI	163.40	3.70	157.57	Jul
Silver (\$)	5.53	-0.01	4.38	Base Rates		7.50	6.75	*at 5pm

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.5914	Mexican (nuevo peso)	13.26
Austria (schillings)	19.76	Netherlands (guilder)	3.1695
Belgium (francs)	58.07	New Zealand (\$)	3.0703
Canada (\$)	2.3834	Norway (krone)	12.00
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8241	Portugal (escudos)	206.57
Denmark (krone)	10.78	Saudi Arabia (riyal)	5.9571
Finland (markka)	8.6462	Singapore (\$)	2.6972
France (francs)	9.4291	Spain (pesetas)	238.64
Germany (marks)	2.8220	South Africa (rand)	9.6593
Greece (drachma)	468.84	Sweden (krone)	12.62
Hong Kong (\$)	12.22	Switzerland (francs)	2.3702
Ireland (pounds)	1.1160	Thailand (bahts)	61.37
India (rupees)	63.89	Turkey (liras)	4225500
Israel (sheqels)	5.5039	USA (\$)	1.5887
Italy (lira)	2788		
Japan (yen)	230.35		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.4980		
Malta (lira)	0.6145		

Rates for information purposes only
Source: Thomas CookOfcom opens
Hull to BT
challenge

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

KINGSTON COMMUNICATIONS, the municipally-owned telecom group which mainly operates in Hull, is considering bidding for a cable television licence in the area after Ofcom, the telecom watchdog, yesterday recommended it be allowed to do so.

As expected, Ofcom yesterday cleared the way for British Telecom to compete in Hull for the first time, although it warned BT that any competition had to be fair.

As compensation, however, Ofcom recommended that Kingston be allowed to offer residential telephone lines outside its own area, and be freed to bid for a cable franchise. Despite being available since 1991, the Hull cable franchise has never been taken up by any of the established operators.

Kingston, which is considering a stock market flotation to raise funds, would not have to lay an entirely new network. The company has announced plans to upgrade its existing network with ADSL - a technology that allows digital signals to be sent down existing copper wires.

It is far from clear whether BT will take the opportunity to go into Hull. "We are looking what commercial opportunities this might represent for us," a BT spokeswoman said yesterday. However, it is thought unlikely that the group

will dig up the streets of Hull in order to build a local network. BT has been barred from competing with Kingston, which dominates the residential telephone market in the Hull area, although other operators have been free to offer services since 1991.

In a widespread consultation with Kingston customers, Ofcom found that many were concerned that BT would undermine Kingston with unfair competition.

In an attempt to keep customers happy, Kingston has introduced innovations such as charging just 5.5p for every local call, no matter how long it lasts. This is likely to deter BT, which would not be allowed to match Kingston's offer if it entered the market.

Kingston, which has 170,000 customers in Hull, has been expanding outside the area for some time. The company's fast-growing Torch subsidiary has a licence to offer business telecom services across the UK.

Meanwhile, Ofcom yesterday unveiled plans to charge telecom operators for telephone numbers in an attempt to encourage them to use them more efficiently.

Ofcom said that operators were currently using just 40 per cent of the numbers allocated to them, which led to number shortages.

The watchdog said that the move would put off future telephone code changes.



Steve Maine, chief executive of Kingston Communications, in one of the group's white phone boxes in Hull, which may be facing BT competition. Hull News & Pictures

FTSE to trial
early
index

BY LEA PATERSON

FTSE INTERNATIONAL, which manages and develops the FTSE equity indices, will begin live trials of a pre-market version of the FTSE 100 index on Monday.

The pre-market index is intended to provide an early guide to the opening level of the FTSE 100. It could help to stamp out the early morning volatility that has plagued the market since the launch of Sets, the Stock Exchange's electronic trading system.

Mark Makepeace, FTSE International's managing director, said: "This initiative is aimed at improving visibility on the order book at the critical opening period. I hope it will, over time, help to improve liquidity at the start of official trading."

FTSE International, in conjunction with Reuters, will calculate the pre-market level of the FTSE 100 using brokers' orders placed on the electronic order book prior to the official opening of the market at 9.00am.

Low volumes of trade at the beginning and the end of the trading day have meant that the FTSE 100 has been prone to erratic swings since the introduction of Sets last autumn.

The Stock Exchange has shortened market trading hours in an attempt to solve the problem of early morning volatility although brokers say there is as yet little evidence of a marked improvement in price formation.

DTI reverses bus sale order

THE SALE of a bus company

owned by FirstGroup, the transport company was blocked yesterday by the Department of Trade and Industry after ministers watered down recommendations made by competition authorities.

Last year the company had been ordered to sell a division of its Scottish bus operation after a ruling by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission said FirstGroup's £96m acquisition of Glasgow-based SB Holdings could act against the public interest.

BY RANDEEP RAMESH
Transport Correspondent

The bus operations earmarked for sale, including at least one of SBH's four central Glasgow bus depots, are thought to have a combined annual turnover of £40m, compared to estimated group sales of pounds £750m.

However Margaret Beckett's final act as President of the Board of Trade was to reverse this decision. She argued that sooo after FirstGroup bought the bus company, Stagecoach

had entered the Glasgow market.

Stagecoach bought a fleet of 50 new buses on to the city streets and began operating on five important radial routes into the city just weeks after the MMC's report.

"While the Director General of the Office of Fair Trading has advised that Stagecoach's entry into the Glasgow bus market does not change his view that divestment is necessary, I do not agree," said Mrs Beckett in a statement.

Instead the FirstGroup will

have to follow a ticket pricing strategy to ensure that it cannot undercut and drive out rivals. The package of undertakings will also see minimum service levels, restrictions on fare and frequency changes.

Muir Lockhead, chief executive of FirstGroup, welcomed the decision. "We have worked hard to show the Office of Fair Trading that the acquisition was not against the public interest. At the same time we have significantly improved the quality of bus services in Glasgow."

Book superstores 'to
take 20% of market'

THE CHAIRMAN of Borders,

the American bookseller which is expanding in the UK, predicted yesterday that US-style book superstores could soon account for 20 per cent of the UK market, matching their penetration in America, writes Nigel Cope.

Bob DiRomualdo, chairman of Borders which bought the Books etc chain last year, said that though book superstores are in their infancy in Britain, the combination of larger ranges, together with magazines, music and coffee bars,

would grab market share. "In the US superstores have captured a large share of the book market and we believe the concept will travel," he said.

Borders is to open its first superstore in Britain today on London's Oxford Street.

Waterstone's, which has one superstore in Glasgow, yesterday acquired 10 branches of Student Bookshops from the administrators. The stores (mostly on university campuses) will be rebranded as Waterstone's.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

THE LONDON stock market ended sharply lower yesterday, hit by an opening fall on Wall Street and disappointing figures from the banking giant Lloyds TSB.

The FTSE 100 index closed down 73.7 points to 5837.0, while the FTSE 250 ended 2.7 off at 5482.7 and the Small Cap Index finished 5.3 points higher at 2472.5.

A large provision for pension mis-selling at Lloyds surprised the market and sent the shares in the banking group plummeting.

Market Report, page 17

NEW YORK

US STOCKS headed lower as renewed concerns about Japan overshadowed better than expected second-quarter gross domestic product. The market was still weighed down by worries about falling corporate earnings and the Asian crisis.

At 5.44 BST the Dow Jones stood at 9001.72, down 25.23. "It's very disappointing the market didn't rally with better than expected GDP figures," said Peter Coolidge, senior equity trader at Brean Murray & Co.

TOKYO

TOKYO STOCKS closed higher amid hopes the government would move swiftly to revitalise the economy with the markets focusing on what policies the new finance minister, Kiichi Miyazawa, would adopt. The benchmark Nikkei 225 rose 177.37 points, or 1 per cent, to close at 16,378.97.

Mr Miyazawa has already said he preters tax cuts to a fiscal stimulus to prod consumer spending, while the newly appointed prime minister, Keizo Obuchi, has called for 6 trillion yen in tax cuts.

GERMANY

GERMAN SHARES ended slightly off, dragged down from early advances by Wall Street, with the benchmark Dax index closing 0.12 per cent down at 5,873.92. The Xetra Dax lost 0.76 per cent to close at 5,861.19. Merger speculation buoyed Dresdner Bank shares, which soared 6 per cent.

"There is wild speculation again that the Allianz will merge with Dresdner or otherwise there is some big merger in the wings," one dealer said.

RUSSIA

RUSSIAN SHARES eased on profit-taking, with the RTS index falling 0.35 per cent to 149.65. Traders said the market was eager for news from the International Monetary Fund's deputy managing director, Stanley Fischer, who is in Moscow this weekend to check on progress of government reforms. A meeting between Anatoly Chubais, Russia's chief foreign debt negotiator, and President Boris Yeltsin, ended without major news despite rumours that Mr Chubais would be asked back into the government.

16/SHARES									
High	Low	Open	Close	High	Low	Open	Close	High	Low
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES									
422 Allied Brew	58.00	57.00	57.00	422 Allied Brew	58.00	57.00	57.00	422 Allied Brew	58.00
422 Allied Brew	58.00	57.00	57.00	422 Allied Brew	58.00	57.00	57.00	422 Allied Brew	58.00
BANKS									
1230 1500 Bank	11.00	11.00	11.00	1230 1500 Bank	11.00	11.00	11.00	1230 1500 Bank	11.00
1230 1500 Bank	11.00	11.00	11.00	1230 1500 Bank	11.00	11.00	11.00	1230 1500 Bank	11.00
BEVERAGES									
1176 400 Beer	1.00	1.00	1.00	1176 400 Beer	1.00	1.00	1.00	1176 400 Beer	1.00
1176 400 Beer	1.00	1.00	1.00	1176 400 Beer	1.00	1.00	1.00	1176 400 Beer	1.00
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION									
100 1000 Build	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Build	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Build	1.00
100 1000 Build	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Build	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Build	1.00
ENGINEERING									
100 1000 Eng	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Eng	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Eng	1.00
100 1000 Eng	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Eng	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Eng	1.00
INSURANCE									
100 1000 Ins	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Ins	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Ins	1.00
100 1000 Ins	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Ins	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Ins	1.00
LEISURE & HOTELS									
100 1000 Leis	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Leis	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Leis	1.00
100 1000 Leis	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Leis	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Leis	1.00
PERPETUAL									
100 1000 Per	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Per	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Per	1.00
100 1000 Per	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Per	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Per	1.00
SHORTS									
100 1000 Sho	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Sho	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Sho	1.00
100 1000 Sho	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Sho	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Sho	1.00
MEDIUMS									
100 1000 Med	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Med	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Med	1.00
100 1000 Med	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Med	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Med	1.00
LONGS									
100 1000 Lon	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Lon	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Lon	1.00
100 1000 Lon	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Lon	1.00	1.00	1.00	100 1000 Lon	1.00

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source: Bloomberg
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When the chips are down, chop here

A WEEK is a long-time in the fast-moving world of semi-conductors.

On 21 July Siemens held a dinner to extol the virtues of its UK operations, and in particular its state-of-the-art chip plant on North Tyneside. Don't worry, says its chief executive in the UK, Plunging chip prices might be wreaking havoc on the group's semi-conductor business as a whole but the firm's Tyneside plant was built in fact it was as efficient as anything the company had in Germany, Taiwan or the US. Phase two might have been canned but Siemens was getting as much output from phase one as the entire project had been targeted to achieve.

Little did he realise how much built-in obsolescence there were in those words. Seven days later Siemens top brass met in Munich and decided that they had one chip plant too many. And, you've guessed, North Tyneside was the one that was surplus to requirements. Yesterday the news was



OUTLOOK

broken to an understanding shocked workforce of 1,100 who will be looking for new jobs come September.

John Redwood claims they are the latest victims of the strong pound. But he is wrong. This is one piece of retrenchment that cannot be blamed on the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee.

The strength of sterling is not responsible for the 95 per cent decline in DRAM prices since Siemens decided to build the plant three years ago or the Asian cri-

sis which has led to dumping on an unprecedented scale. Nor can it be blamed for the way that the growth in chip demand has undershot Siemens' forecasts by 50 per cent.

But why then has North Tyneside been singled out for special treatment when Siemens has similar operations in Germany, Taiwan, France and the US? Dr Ulrich Schumacher, the big chip in the Siemens semi-conductor group, says it is because the plant has the same cost structure as facilities producing two or three times as many wafers. If this is right, then Mr Wood was wrong.

The more likely explanation is that the Dresden plant was never going to close, the French one is jointly owned, the US benefits from a booming economy and the Taiwan plant does not pay UK wages.

None of this is much consolation to the workers on Tyneside who thought a new dawn had arrived when Siemens came charging over the hill. Peter Mandelson, the new Trade and Industry Secretary, has

formed a joint taskforce to try to rescue the plant. But if Siemens has already trawled the market for a buyer without success, what chance has he of pulling the fat out of the fire?

Sir Brian rolls out the Three Cs

WHEN CLEARING bank chairmen start complaining there is too much competition in the market, what they really mean is that there is too much competition. Their answer to the above problem is consolidation.

Yesterday it was the turn of the bankers' banker, Sir Brian Pittman of Lloyds TSB, to roll out the Three Cs.

Yesterday's results from the bank were weighed down by heavier than expected pension mis-selling provisions and the share price over-reacted accordingly. But what ought to be exercising the markets is how Lloyds along with the rest of the sector is going to adjust to a

downturn in the economic cycle and an upturn in the degree of regulation over the next couple of years.

That is where consolidation comes in. Lloyds is still generating capital faster than it can find uses for the stuff and probably has £10bn to throw around on a stray mortgage provider or insurer.

But Sir Brian seems to envisage the kind of banking consolidation we have seen in the US and Europe in coming months, which involves capital outlays of a rather larger order or mergers of equals.

Virtually none of the banks deserve the fancy ratings they currently enjoy, and we are likely to see a re-rating of all the financials in the coming months. Step forward Rank, the Hard Rock Cafe to hingo group.

The Independent's revelation that the troubled outfit is being circled by venture capital funds gave Footsie's flagging drive a bit of a Viagra treatment. The shares, a pathetic under-achiever in recent times, put on 13.8 per cent to end at 337p, at the top of the blue-chip board.

Having the cash or paper to do the deals is one thing. Getting regulatory clearance is quite another.

Murdoch set for digital dogfight

AFTER MONTHS of hype and corporate bluster, the battle lines for the great digital dogfight of 1999 are becoming clear.

On the evidence of the past week, Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB looks like the clear favourite. While British Digital Broadcasting - sorry, ON Digital - announced its new name in a blaze of publicity on Tuesday, it couldn't disguise the fact that the rest of its strategy is in tatters.

The reason is that Sky, which unveiled its plans on Thursday. It will launch in October with a massive marketing campaign - ably supported, no doubt, by Uncle Rupert's newspapers - and an impressive array of channels, sport and pay-per-view movies. The whole lot will

be available for a starting price of less than £10 a month and, hey, when you've forked out £200 for a dish they'll even come and install it for nothing.

This leaves ON Digital's offering looking rather threadbare. It was supposed to be a cheap and cheerful alternative to Sky, bringing you 30 channels for under a tenner without the stigma of having to fit a dish to the side of the house. But Sky has signed up all the channels - many of them on an exclusive basis. And it looks as if ON Digital's price advantage has disappeared as well.

However, this is not a two-horse race. While Sky looks streaks ahead of ON Digital already, the real threat could be from the cable television companies. The prospect of the full 300 channels, no satellite dish, and high-speed internet access as well could prove a compelling alternative to what Sky is offering. As ON Digital has found to its cost, however, Sky will not give up its stranglehold on the couch potato without a fight.

Jobless rise awaits Japan's new leader

ANOTHER SHARP jump in unemployment in Japan, rising to 4.3 per cent in June, has given incoming Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi fresh proof - if any were needed - that there is to be no honeymoon period for his new administration.

On Thursday, Taiichi Sakai, the new director-general of the Economic Planning Agency, had described Japan's jobless level as offering some cause for comfort, observing that it was "still lower than those in some European countries."

The latest figures, released just a day later, show Japan closing the gap with Britain (4.8% in June) and the US (4.5 per cent).

BY ROY GARNER
in Tokyo

Acknowledging that the time left for action is now "not very long", Mr Obuchi indicated on Friday that he was willing to stay in power only until the economy is revitalised, according to Tokyo spokesmen. His official term in office is due to expire next September.

Mr Obuchi added that he will be ready to leave once he is sure that the measures he has adopted are effecting a revival of the economy.

Hinting at strategy, he also mentioned that people should be prepared to suffer some bankruptcies in the banking

sector. On Thursday, new finance minister Kiichi Miyazawa had said that the government planned to submit six bills to the current parliament session that would include a "total plan" to bail out banks.

Japan's jobless rate, which had been steady at 3.5 per cent for the past three years, broke the 4 per cent barrier in April, standing at 4.1 per cent in both April and May.

The jobless rate among women, meanwhile, reached a post-war high of 4.2 per cent in June, a 0.3 per cent increase from one month earlier.

The latest figures show 2.84 million people out of work in June, an increase of 550,000

from one year earlier. The Labour Ministry added to the gloom by announcing that the ratio of job offers to job seekers dropped to 0.51 in June, the worst figure since January 1978.

The jobless downturn is likely to intensify calls for the speedy introduction of permanent tax cuts, of up to 10 trillion yen, and a cut in the consumption tax, possibly to its earlier level of 3 per cent - the two measures regarded as most critical to the creation of new jobs.

The top priority, however, will continue to be dealing with Japan's bad loans, totalling in excess of \$600 billion.



Mike Darrington (left), managing director, and Malcolm Simpson, financial director of Greggs, the Newcastle-based retail baker, which has announced a record interim pre-tax profit of £6.1m for the 24 weeks to 13 June - a rise of 14.7 per cent. Sales were

7.4 per cent higher than in the comparable period last year. The company said it was in the middle of a two-year investment programme which had increased overheads but would deliver cost and service benefits in the future

Tony Andrews

Intersport to tighten image BTR hives off aero divisions

BY NIGEL COPE

INTERSPORT, the group of 400 independent sports retailers, is planning a major shake-up of its operations to fight back against the major chains, such as JJB Sports and the supermarkets. The buying and merchandising group, created to give the independent sports shops more power, will insist in future that full members operate under the Intersport banner and adhere to uniform store designs, staff training and product selection. Currently many members continue to trade under their independent fascia which Intersport says weakens the awareness of the name and diminishes marketing efficiencies.

Members will have until September to decide whether they wish to be full corporate mem-

bers or simply be buying members, which would not entitle them to use the Intersport name.

The group said the changes "will allow Intersport to focus marketing resources to support the brand and will allow Intersport to compete more effectively in the market place as a national retailer with a strong high street presence."

The changes have already been approved by the group's members, with 92 per cent voting in favour. Intersport says the changes will mean 220 stores trading under the Intersport name by 2000.

The changes are in response to the increasing power of the major sports shop chains, and to fight the major supermarket groups which are sourcing branded sports clothing from the grey market.

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

BTR, the former conglomerate which is trying to turn itself into an engineering group, yesterday speeded up its disposal programme by selling its Aerospace businesses for £510m.

Doughty Hanson, the fast-growing venture capital firm, is buying the division for cash.

BTR said it had decided to sell the business "in the face of major consolidation in the aerospace industry." It added that the price was attractive, representing a multiple of 2.1 times the division's 1997 sales and 9.8 times operating profits.

The deal takes the amount raised from disposals by Ian Strachan, BTR's chief executive, since his appointment two and a half years ago to £42bn.

The aerospace businesses, which include parts of the

former Dunlop rubber group which BTR bought in 1985, were not specifically earmarked for disposal. However, BTR decided to sell them because they were not large enough to compete in the global aerospace market.

"Although profitable, they are small both in terms of BTR and their sector, and are not able to achieve our stated goals effectively," he said.

The move was welcomed in the City, where BTR shares firmed 7.5p to 154p.

BTR is selling Standard Aero, which repairs aero engines; Dunlop Aviation, which makes aircraft wheels and brakes; Aero Engine Equipment, which makes components for turbofan engines; and Dunlop Precision Rubber, which makes seals and mouldings for the aerospace market.

IN BRIEF

Underground work for Racal

A CONSORTIUM including Racal Electronics has been selected as the single bidder for a £1bn contract to replace and manage London Underground's radio and transmission services. The deal, part of the Private Finance Initiative to build public sector projects, is worth about £1bn over 21 years for the consortium, CityLink Telecommunications. Other shareholders include Motorola, Fluor Daniels, Hyder and Charterhouse Bank.

Names setback

LOYD'S of London can proceed with plans to reclaim more than £150m in connection with the insurance market's record £8bn losses in the past after the Court of Appeal refused an application for an appeal by a more than 500 of its individual backers, known as Names. Lloyd's and a group of non-accepting Names have been battling in the courts since then. Philip Holden, the head of Lloyd's financial recovery department, said: "This is the end of the long road of litigation for those Names who have not paid their debts. All the appropriate enforcement measures will now be pursued as soon as possible."

Scottish decline

THERE WAS a sharp decline in Scottish manufacturing output, orders and employment in July, according to a survey by the Bank of Scotland. Prices of goods bought by manufacturers continued to fall, largely because of cheaper imports, but wages and salaries in the service sector continued to rise. David Jenkins of the Bank of Scotland said: "The decline in absolute terms in manufacturing output in Scotland is increasingly worrying. The immediate prospects for the Scottish economy leave little room for encouragement."

Coral deal threat

LADBROKE's last-ditch attempt to gain regulatory approval for its £263m takeover of rival bookmaker Coral yesterday ran into fierce criticism from opponents to the deal. William Hill, Ladbroke's arch-rival, and a group of independent bookmakers said they would write to Peter Mandelson, the new trade and industry secretary, to complain that Ladbroke's offer to sell an extra 187 shops to the Tote would still leave as the dominant player in the industry. The DTI is due to decide on the merger within 20 days.

GPG turnabout

GUINNESS PEAT GROUP (GPG) has dropped demands for a demerger and the return of cash to shareholders, the support services group Staveley Industries said yesterday. GPG, the New Zealand investment group chaired by Ron Brierley, owns 12.8 per cent of Staveley and had called for the demerger of British Salt and the return of cash to Staveley shareholders. A extraordinary meeting is scheduled for 6 August.

Takeover story sets Rank shares soaring

THERE IS nothing like a hostile takeover story to spice up a dull summer day. Better still if it involves one of the chronic underperformers of recent times. Step forward Rank, the Hard Rock Cafe to hingo group.

The Independent's revelation that the troubled outfit is being circled by venture capital funds gave Footsie's flagging drive a bit of a Viagra treatment. The shares, a pathetic under-achiever in recent times, put on 13.8 per cent to end at 337p, at the top of the blue-chip board.

Unfortunately, Rank's soaring run could do little against the powerful bearish winds coming from overseas, which swept Footsie away in the afternoon. A negative opening on Wall Street and worries about Japan proved the leading index's undoing, playing a major part in the 73.7 point closing loss to 5837.0 points.

The FTSE 250 and the small cap benefited from their insular nature and had a better day than their bigger brother. The 250 finished just 2.7 points off at 5483.7, while the small cap managed a 5.2 point rise to 2472.5.

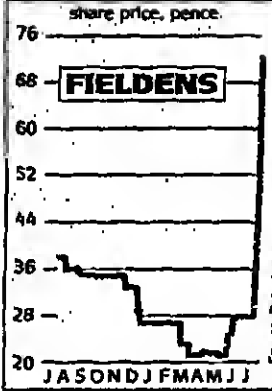
Among blue chips, the banks were once again under

MARKET REPORT



FRANCISCO GUERRERA

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



counted for a 9.2 per cent collapse. The final recorded price was 711p.

Other banks ignored Seta's vagaries and focused on Lloyds' woes. Abbey National lost 41p to 1.141p. Halifax was 7p lower at 725p. Bank of Scotland was 34p off to 370p, while NatWest, which reports figures on Tuesday, was down 65p to 1.060. The bank said yesterday it was selling its car-leasing business to joint venture partner Lex Services.

The earnings-enhancing deal and a roaring set of results helped Lex, the rent-a-car group, to motor ahead 17p to 511.5p.

Cellular phone operators were upwardly mobile after Merrill set a near-term target price of 1,050p for Orange. The shares took a giant leap towards the target, rising 47.5p to 743p.

Vodafone remained connected to its rival and rose 20p in sympathy. Securicor, part-owner of Cellnet, was close by with a 13p rise to 558p.

Albright & Wilson, the chemicals group, found the right mix of takeover speculation and a positive note from Williams de Broe. The shares topped the FTSE 250 risers' list after a 11.4 per cent gain to 121.5p. They were challenged for top spot by Arcadia, the clothes shop chain, which put on a 5.3 per cent rise to 361.5p.

SEAQ VOLUME: 324.9m

SEAQ TRADES: 72,689

GLTS INDEX: n/a

Chronicle also provided an helping hand. The shares leapt 52.5p to 237.5p.

No such luck or Geo Interactive. The small IT company admitted that first-half revenues would be lower than expected because of the delayed shipment of some of its products, and dealers took fright.

The stock shed 45 per cent of its value to 62.5p. Similar grim story for the engineer Loades. A plunge in loss at the halfway stage and the shares soon followed, losing 170p to 325p.

Lex Service, the car dealer and contract-hire group, continued the shake-up in the UK car-leasing industry yesterday when it agreed to pay up to £128.5m for full control of Lex Vehicle Leasing. Lex has run the contract-hire division as a 50:50 joint venture with Lombard North Central for several years.

Under the terms of yesterday's deal, Lex Service is paying £83.5m for an additional 30 per cent stake, with an option to buy the remainder in three years.

The deal follows a statement by Arriva, the former Cowie bus group, that it has received expressions of interest in its vehicle-leasing division.

The Lex deal arose because Lombard is keen to concentrate on its own contract-hire business, British Car Contracts.

The deal was announced as Lex Service reported a strong set of interim results, with half-year profits up by 18 per cent to £36m and good performances across the group in

leasing, trucks, car parts and the Hyundai dealerships.

The results were in stark contrast to other companies in the sector, such as Car Group, whose shares have been devastated by profits warnings over tumbling used car prices.

Lex said the downturn in prices had affected disposal profits, and this was expected to continue in the second half.

The interim dividend was increased to 7.5p up from 6.8p last year. The shares closed 17p higher at 511.5p.

Lex wins Leasing control

BY NIGEL COPE

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SPORT



Linford Christie, although having officially retired from competition last year, remains as popular a figure with autograph-hunting athletics fans as he was during the days of his medal-winning campaigns

Allsport

Christie keeps winning formula

MIDWAY THROUGH last Saturday afternoon, an ex-athlete talking on a mobile phone strolled round the perimeter of Birmingham's Alexander Stadium, where the annual AAA Championships and trials were taking place.

A middle-aged woman with a camera was the first to spot him. Two teenage girls arrived next, giggling. Then three Cub Scouts were swarming round him, demanding autographs. "First you have to say something," "Please?" "OK".

As the subject of the Cubs' attention signed, one of them reached up to touch his watch. "Is that real gold?" he asked. "No," the man replied with a grin. "It's just painted to look like that." But it was real gold.

If anyone doubted that Linford Christie would retain his popular appeal after quitting the track, this informal demonstration served as well as anything else to lay those doubts to rest. Not that Christie himself had any: "I think the thing with the public will stay with me," said the former Olympic world, European and Commonwealth 100 metres champion. "I have been nice to adults and children all through my career."

This week marks the anniversary of the sudden decision by Britain's greatest sprinter to end that career. At 38, one year into the rest of his life, Christie finds himself busier than he has ever been.

The management company he

founded with fellow athlete Colin Jackson, Nuff Respect, is taking up increasing amounts of his time, despite the fact that Jackson has now left - something which hurt and baffled Christie in equal measure. Recently, he has begun recording a new television series of *Record Breakers*, which is now known as *Linford Christie's Record Breakers*.

He still trains with and coaches a small group of athletes, three of whom - Darren Campbell, Paul Gray and Katherine Merry - provided him with cause for celebration last weekend as they won AAA titles. And as he watched over his charges from the stand, Christie had a younger dependant to consider in the form of his 18-month-old daughter, Briannah.

He was relaxed. And when his athletes won, he was exuberant. It made a pleasant contrast to the matters which had so publicly preoccupied him earlier in the month.

For many outside the sport, the predominant recent image of Christie was that of a man weeping in the High Court witness box in the course of his successful libel action against a magazine article, written by the former prisoner John McVicar, which accused him of drug abuse.

A case that had taken three years to come to court gripped Christie with an emotional force he could not have foreseen: "For me it was a shock," he said. "I sat there and it was put to me that I was definitely

A year after ending his extraordinary athletics career, Britain's former multi-champion is still driven by the need to succeed, whether training a new generation of sprinters or defending his reputation in the High Court. Interview by Mike Rowbottom

a cheat. Not even possibly, but definitely. And they said my coach, Ron Roddian, had cheated because he had helped me to get the drug I was accused of taking.

"That's the part that got me emotional, because Ron is the most honest human person you can ever meet. I can defend myself. But what has Ron ever done to anybody? He gave up a lot of his time to help me achieve something, to give people someone to cheer on. Even people like John McVicar. I go out there to make him feel good about himself."

The argument that it was never worth his while embroiling himself in a traumatic, mud-slinging court case over an article written by a convicted felon in an obscure, and now defunct, magazine is one he acknowledges - but rejects.

"I don't regret taking the action," he said. "I would do it again exactly the same. If someone wants to think I was on drugs, well they can think what they like. But if someone writes it, I don't care if it was in a one-page magazine and only one person read it. Because it could be the wrong one person. It could be a kid

who has admired what I have done and wondered about whether they could do the same thing. And then they read I'm on drugs. I have got to correct that."

"I felt I was in a Catch-22 situation. If I didn't defend myself against what McVicar had written, maybe people would have said: 'He isn't defending it. Maybe it's true.'"

"It was said in court that every single athlete is on drugs. That is totally wrong. I have been fighting for the good of the sport as well, because if it's thought that someone who was at the top of the sport like myself had taken drugs, the sponsors are going to say 'Let's get out of the sport, because you obviously can't win anything unless you are on drugs.'"

For all that, Christie felt let down by various parts of the sport during his case. He is still clearly angry at those members of the media who he feels have been ready to help McVicar's cause. And he also felt a distinct lack of encouragement from those within the sporting establishment.

"I felt I could have done with a lot more by way of phone calls or encouragement," he said. "I felt as if

some people in the sport got scared, sat on the fence and waited, although a lot of the athletes were great. Because they knew, I wasn't worried about the case, because I knew there was no way that you could find 12 people who would say 'Yes, I was on drugs.' I knew there's not a man alive or dead who could have said 'Yes, I've given Linford Christie drugs, yes, I've seen him taking drugs.' I just wanted to get the message out there that I will not tolerate anybody who tries to take my reputation away, especially in that way. And I only take people to court when I know I am going to win."

Winning was something that Christie made a habit of when he was competing.

But the growing pressure of expectation caused him to consider retiring years before he actually made his sudden announcement midway through last year's World Championships in Athens, where he was present as a BBC analyst.

He had begun the season by saying his international career would not stretch beyond the European Cup in June - where he led Britain

to their first win since 1989, when he had been summarily appointed captain to receive the trophy.

"I just felt this horrible pressure that's put on British athletes," he said. "For some of my rivals, particularly the Americans, it was different. They were allowed to lose one or two races, to experiment from time to time. But for me it always had to be 'win, win, win.'"

You suspect, however, that that imperative came from within. And the template is still there.

"Anything I do in my life is based on what I did in athletics," he said. "I put 100 per cent into everything I do." That attitude caused problems when it came to guiding the fortunes of younger athletes. Just as England's World Cup winner Alan Ball found it hard to come to terms with young footballers who could not match his own commitment when he graduated to management, Christie - who for years trained six, sometimes seven days a week - had to adjust.

"I realised that because I had done it, I shouldn't necessarily expect it of them," he said. "Because everyone's an individual."

Christie will not admit to feeling any pangs of regret since giving up his track career. He maintains that he is fully detached from his old calling, but it looks more like semi-detachment. "When I watch the guys I'm like a boxer who sees an

old sparring partner becoming heavyweight champion. You always believe that because you used to knock them around, then if they can do it, you can do it."

He denies being tempted to resume his career, but still talks wistfully about last season's scrapped plans to run in Britain for his team, Thames Valley Harriers. "If my club needed me to run, I would," Christie said. At the moment, the best young British 100m runners are running more than three-tenths of a second outside Christie's best of 9.87sec - a country mile in sprinting terms.

However, should one of them surpass the great man's best time in the future, Christie said he would be delighted. "Especially if it is Darren," he added. "Records are meant to be broken, and hopefully someone will run faster than 9.87. It will be great for the sport. The stands will be full again."

"People will come out and say, 'we want to watch this runner'. But the problem is that people are pressurising the young guys by saying they have to be the new Linford Christie. And they are pressurising themselves. The more they try to be like me, the more tight they are going to become."

"So the message to them has to be to go out and do what they have to do. And forget me."

It's a point of view. But try telling that to the Cub Scouts.

It's so difficult to outwit an octogenarian

FLAGS OF all nations fluttered around the rim of Wembley Stadium, just as they had exactly half a century earlier for the opening of the 1948 Olympics.

Gathered dutifully in the main stand next to Princess Anne, the recalled competitors of that Olympiad heard the recorded speeches of the departed: Lord Burghley and King George the VI, men gone from this earth, whose voices sounded here as they had 50 years previously.

The applause of 85,000 long-gone spectators thundered through the empty stands.

On the scoreboard, the words of Baron De Coubertin - "The important thing in the Olympic Games is not winning but taking part" - stood proud, as they had done on



MIKE ROWBOTTOM

July 29, 1948. This time, however, the message was brought to us by Coca-Cola.

And this time, there was a feeling of impatience, rather than celebration, in the air which centred around the media corps - of whom, OK, I was one - waiting to interview the star of those Games, the 30-year-old housewife and mother-of-two who defied the critics to win four gold medals: Fanny Blankers-Koen.

Aged 50 now - as she would be, given the way time works - her blonde hair, though shaded with grey, was still as lively as she was. While the press men waited and the band of the Scots Guards trumpeted, boomed and oomph-ed their way back and forth across the Wembley turf, she waved cheerily to her companion on this special day, who would very shortly join her in the car that was waiting to take her to the airport for her return flight to the Netherlands.

As in 1948, Fanny missed her home. But for now, however, she was content, tapping her hand to the military beat on her lime green trouser suit.

The tune was "My old man said follow the van," you know the one. Then they went into "Ma, ma, come and make eyes at me down at the old Bull and Bush."

The camera crews slowly gathered about the frail but lively octogenarian like the birds in the Alfred Hitchcock film. Fluffy booms were angled to within inches of her brow. Lenses were focused. Reporters with furrowed expressions lent forward with their microphones, waiting, waiting, for that military music to stop.

These medleys. It's so clever the

way they keep moving them along. We were on to Mary Poppins now - "In the most delightful way". Then, smoothly, into "Knees Up Mother Brown".

There was a massed raising of eyebrows. "Two more minutes," an organiser assured everyone.

The last oomph echoed away. The moment had arrived, and FBK skipped nimbly back to her tawdry plastic seat to face the questions. "So," began the foremost interviewer. "Can we start?" But it was the music which started again.

"Land of Hope and Glory" this time, which caused the media throng to rear back as if someone had slung something disgusting into their midst.

FBK clearly loved "Land of Hope and Glory", tapping her foot approvingly, clapping along and beaming over to her would-be inquisitors to share an enjoyment which elicited no more than a couple of strained smiles.

At last, the sound of silence returned. To be swiftly broken by a word from our red-jacketed master of ceremonies: "Now ladies and gentlemen, will you please kindly rise for the Olympic anthem."

It was, as these anthems so often are, a stirring and lengthy composition, dwindling and rising to innumerable crescendos and diminuendos.

Outside, surely, the FBK limousine was already ticking over, her chauffeur consulting his watch.

Then, finally, there was silence once again. The press bustled forward once again. And the MC stepped forward once again. "Ladies and gentlemen, will you kindly now stand while the Royal party take their leave of the stadium."

FBK looked over to her friend again, amazed with mirth. Here was a fresh memory of Wembley for her. "And all those reporters there waiting for me..." She looked as if she would enjoy dining out on it.

The royal party had gone on but the MC had not. "I'm sure," he said. "You would now like to show your appreciation of the Scots Guards."

The music swelled once more.

New coach Henry has a safe pair of hands

RUGBY UNION
BY ROBERT COLE

GRAHAM HENRY waltzed into Wales yesterday on the first assignment of his £1.25m job as the new Wales coach and promptly soft-shoe shuffled around every curve ball thrown his way.

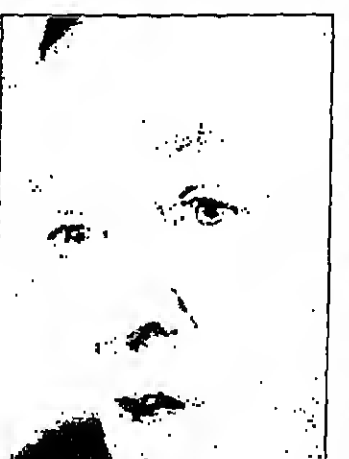
The 53-year-old New Zealander, faced by a barrage of television cameras and journalists, picked his way through the questions with extreme caution.

Henry is being hailed as the new Messiah of Welsh rugby, but he left no rope dangling with which to be hung the months ahead by not making anything remotely approaching a rash promise.

The man who has enjoyed almost unblemished success with Auckland, Auckland Blues and New Zealand A now finds himself in charge of a national team still coming to terms with a 96-point hiding from South Africa.

"I have come with no preconceived ideas and I expect the Welsh players to be like any other player anywhere in the world, to have a desire to do their best," he said.

"I want committed guys who give 100 per cent to the team and are obligated to their training and fitness. I want them to be excited about playing for Wales and I want them on the edge of the edge."



Henry wants Wales to be 'on the edge of the edge' *Alisport*

As to Welsh expectations when they host next year's World Cup there was another neat side-stepping answer: "As long as there is an upward slope of improvement, most people will be happy with that," he said.

And as to taking up the poisoned chalice there was more of the same. "Every coach realises that if they don't produce results they can't expect to last," he said. "That is part of the deal and I am comfortable with that."

Henry, who takes over three months after the departure of Kevin Bowring, will return to Wales to take up his post on 28 August will then go under the microscope in a big way, starting with the Test against South Africa at Wembley in November.

"There is a great passion for the game in Wales and that was a major reason for me in accepting the offer, but the foundations have to be there to produce a good team," he said.

"You cannot put the cart before the horse, the right structure is crucial if Wales are going to be competitive."

Henry has indicated he is likely to take a couple of Welsh club coaches aboard his coaching team, but he will not be rushed into anything he may later regret.

"I need time to get the feel of things," he said. "It won't be tomorrow and it might not be in 90 days. There is nothing worse than making wrong decisions and then having to change them."

"It was a great honour to first be asked about the post six weeks ago and now I am delighted to be here. I will do as much as I can to ensure Wales get the results we want."

It has been one long success story for Henry so far, but now comes the real test of his coaching ability, with Henry admitting he has been "fortunate" with the players and teams he has worked with over the last seven years. Having said that it is worth noting that of the 39 Super-12 matches Auckland played under his guidance, they won 32, drew one and lost six.

As to his style he left no one in any doubt that he is very much a hands-on man. "I am a coach - a trackside coach - and I always have been a coach," he said. "I am not a manager. I leave management to others."

Bullets for sale but future looks secure

BASKETBALL
BY RICHARD TAYLOR

THE BUDWEISER play-off champions, Peugeot Bullets Birmingham, are up for sale, but their owner, Harry Wrublewski, has allayed fears for the club's future by saying: "I won't leave this club high and dry. My gut feeling is that I will still be here at the end of next season."

The new Budweiser league campaign begins in six weeks. Bullets are having talks with Nottingham Panthers ice hockey club to buy 50 per cent of the franchise. But the situation has arisen only because Wrublewski wants to return to his home in Australia, where his mother is dying of cancer.

In seven years Wrublewski, with the Australian-based backing of his brother Mike, has built the Bullets into probably the most financially secure and best supported club in the country.

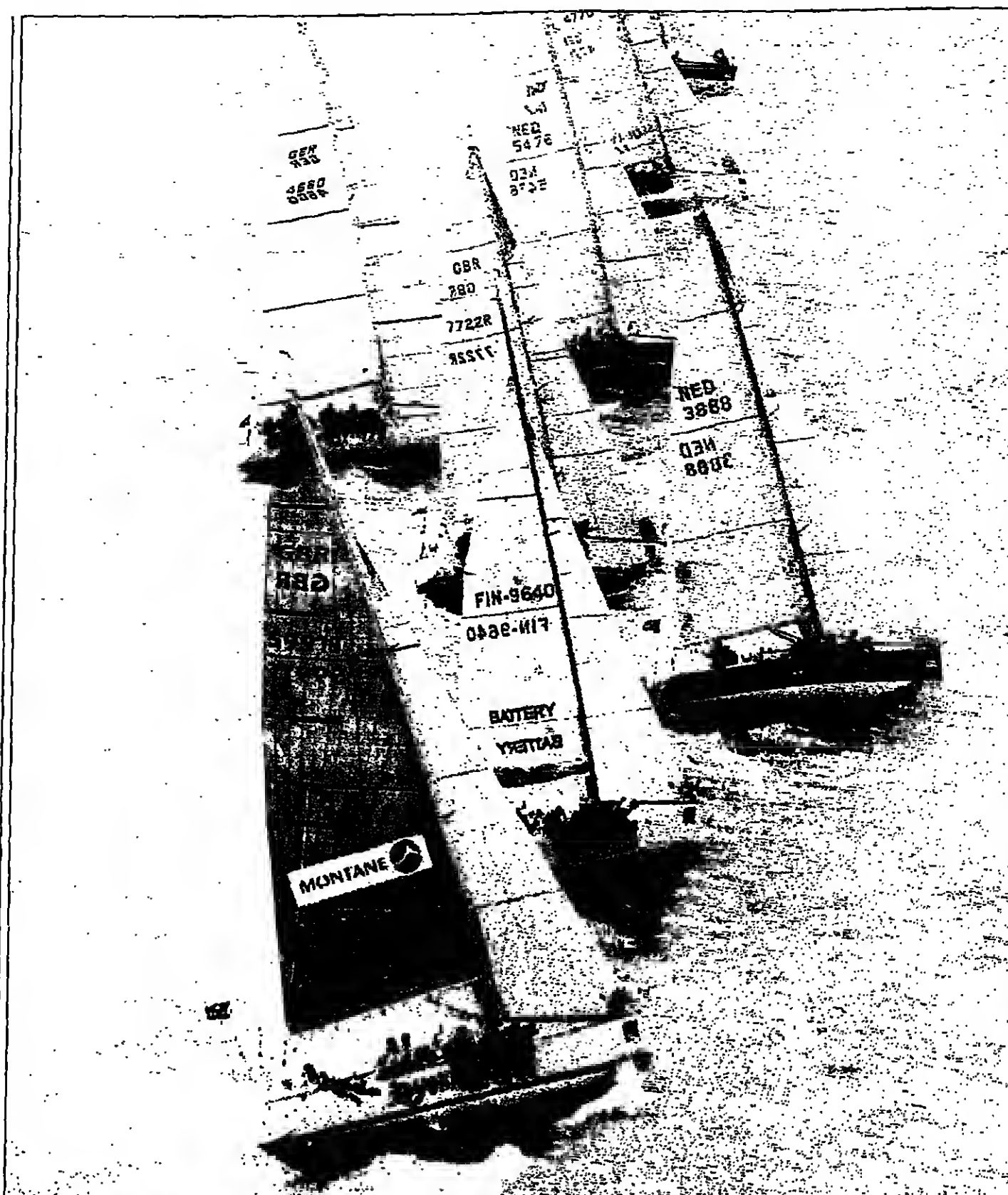
When word circulated that per-

sonal reasons might force Wrublewski to return home, Panthers quickly approached.

Wrublewski said: "We had 60 spectators at our first game, now we can draw up to 10,000. No one need have any fears for the future of this club. We have put the Bullets on a stronger footing than any team in the league. We are having talks with Panthers but there are no deals on the table and there is no contract."

Bullets' 6ft 11in international Chris Haslam has signed for the Greek Second Division Apollon Patras, leaving the club to search for an American big man to replace him.

The Nigerian Julius Nwosu has tested positive for ephedrine at the World Basketball Championship, the sport's ruling body, Fiba, said yesterday. He has been suspended from the rest of the tournament and if the second test proves positive he faces a ban from national and club basketball for between one to three months.



Conditions in the Solent were tough for the Commodore's Cup and Cowes Week, starting today, can expect the same *Kos Photos*

Radio days at Cowes Week

SAILING

TURN ON, tune in, go racing is the message from sponsors Skandia Life as they hand out 416 little yellow radios to competitors in Cowes Week, which begins its eight-day festival of sailing today. Of course, there will still be the tradition of flags breaking out their signals and cannons reinforcing them to inform the smaller, mainly dayboat classes, of the courses they are to sail and the countdown to their starts.

This time they must listen to Cowes Week Radio as well for all of that, though for many it will be the same as usual, just follow the ones in front. The grown-ups in the bigger keelboats are all expected to have radios, so all their information will be sent

by radio, flags only being used for postponements.

There have often been many of those, but this year it at least looks as if that all-important racing flag, wind, will be available. It was in previous short supply far too many times last year, when one complete day was lost, the opening one, and many smaller classes lost three or four.

There may also be a last-minute rush for oilskins among the 835 entries, about 100 down on last year, but, judging from a High Street boasting one new delicatessen opposite an Island Sailing Club installing extra bedroom capacity and a handful of new restaurants the party will be as strenuously contested as the sailing.

Not knowing whether to be happy or unhappy is Peter Poland, boss of Hunter Boats, who make the popular 707. He is happy because, with 35 entries, they outnumber all the other sportboats, but unhappy, because this year there are less than 50 although the main reason for that is that a couple of dozen of them instead went to Cork Week earlier in July.

"The Cork craic is getting the upper hand," says Poland, indicating, perhaps, that it should be the Cowes Week organisers that should be unhappy. Take out the dayboats and the number of entries for Cowes Week is now well below those attracted to south-west Ireland every two years.

Both are also major beer festi-

vals, though Cowes likes to project a more champagne image, but people only have a limited number of weeks they can absent themselves from work. So it will be one of the jobs of incoming regatta organiser Stuart Quarrie to maintain the supremacy of Cowes, bringing in new ideas as well as vital sponsorship money. He works alongside the retiring Dan Bradley at the Cowes Combined Clubs centre this week. Next month he is on his own.

At least Cowes Week also now stands alone, separate from the Rolex Commodore's Cup, which finished two days ago, and separate next year from a reorganised Admiral's Cup, which will also be staged in mid-July.

Thompson's footnotes to history

GOODWILL GAMES

JENNY THOMPSON clocked the fourth-fastest butterfly split in history on Thursday during a triumphant evening for the United States in the Goodwill Games team swimming competition.

The five-times Olympic champion helped the United States to win the opening event, the 4x100 medley relay, against the World All Stars with a split of 58.33sec for the butterfly leg.

She then captured the 100 metres butterfly in 58.72, the 12th-fastest in

history, only minutes before switching disciplines and anchoring the 4x100 metres freestyle relay quartet to victory by 0.39sec. The final relay win was sufficient to give the US the match 65-57 and keep them on course for the gold medal today. The Americans will meet Germany, who defeated China 80-42.

Thompson said: "The last five metres I felt like that guy in *Saving Private Ryan*, all slow motion, a blurry haze where you can't figure out what's going on."

"I was just dead, somehow I made it to the wall, luckily I was

there first. I knew it was going to be difficult, but I had no clue it was going to be this difficult. I was just hoping I would survive this whole experience."

The South African double Olympic champion, Penny Heyns, won the 100 and 200 metres breaststroke in 1:08.14 and 2:27.58 respectively.

The Olympic 200 metres freestyle champion, Franziska van Almsick, won her gold medal event plus the 100 metres butterfly for Germany.

Michelle Kwan, silver medalist at this year's Nagano Olympics, led

after the ice dance short programme from the world silver medalist, Maria Butyrskaya. The American teenageer was greeted with thunderous applause which reached a crescendo as she finished with a flourish. The Russian Victoria Volchkova, who turned 16 on Thursday, was lying third in her first senior competition.

In the boxing semi-finals, the American flyweight Roberto Benitez celebrated his 18th birthday with the biggest win of his career. Benitez, one of three US teenagers to advance to the finals, outpointed the Armenian Vakhang Darchinyan.

Fogarty focused on making amends to fans

MOTORCYCLING
BY NORMAN FOX

A YEAR after disappointing over 60,000 motorcycling fans at Brands Hatch by falling from his Ducati, the British former World Superbike champion, Carl Fogarty, returns to the scene tomorrow in an attempt to reward them with victories in what could be a farewell appearance.

After eight rounds, Fogarty aged 32, who won both superbike races at Brands Hatch three years ago and was world champion in 1994 and 1995, is in fourth place in the overall championship which is led by the Australian Troy Corser, also on a Ducati.

But Fogarty, from Blackburn, is more concerned about repaying the loyalty of his fans and winning at least one of tomorrow's two races. "There's been a lot of talk about me retiring," he said. "But all the time I think I can win, I want to go on." Even so, his retirement is expected at the end of the season.

After being fastest in yesterday's practice that was for a long time dominated by Steve Hislop, Britain's "wild card" Yamaha rider, the chances of Fogarty succeeding at Brands are greater than of eventually recovering all of the lost ground in the championship itself.

Although he started the season with a win in Australia, various mechanical problems and what he admits has been his own inconsistency have condemned him to a supporting role, which he has hated so much that he has deflected rather than denied retirement.

For most of this season, his spectacular red Italian Ducati has been left wanting for acceleration by Japanese machines. Corser, although only 11th fastest yesterday and with only one victory, has raced his Ducati consistently in the top points scorers. He is familiar with Brands, having won there before. He also has an advantage this weekend in knowing that two of the fastest riders in superbike racing, the New Zealander Aaron Slight (Honda) and the Japanese Kawasaki rider Akira Yanagawa, were both victims of frightening crashes in the last round in California. Yanagawa suffered head injuries but Slight, who is second overall, escaped with a badly cut foot which, however, did not stop him achieving third fastest yesterday.

Apart from Fogarty and Hislop, British interest tomorrow will be on Jamie Whitham, the Suzuki rider, who tumbled off yesterday but walked away, and Neil Hodgson on a Kawasaki. Last year Hodgson rode brilliantly at Brands, with a fourth place, while Whitham's enthusiasm rarely gets rewarded on the spectacular Kent circuit which brings back bad memories. Just before the 1995 event he was taken ill. Later cancer was diagnosed. After a full recovery, he is now holding eighth place in the championship.

WORLD SUPERBIKES official practice (Brands Hatch) 1. C. Fogarty (GB) Ducati 1:26.109, 2. S. Hislop (GB) Yamaha 1:26.294, 3. A. Slight (NZ) Honda 1:26.378, 4. P. Corser (AU) Ducati 1:26.711, 5. N. Hodgson (GB) Kawasaki 1:26.555.

TODAY'S NUMBER

7
The number of days that David Unsworth was an Aston Villa player - one of the shortest sojourns in football history. Unsworth makes other short-termers - Joey Beauchamp's 56 days at West Ham, Asa Hartford's 61 days at Nottingham Forest and Clive Allen's 62 days at Arsenal - seem like seasoned veterans.

Taking a dart at brownies on the wildest moor

"NO, NO Brian. My legs just won't go that far," said I in unbelieveing voice, verging on the high pitched. "Oh dear OK then, let's find an easier bit to cross," said Brian in a lovely West Country voice.

Brian Easterbrook, latterday prison officer, 1994 English Rivers fly fishing champion, member of the 1995 and '96 England international fly fishing team, was trying to make me cross the West Dart river. A tiny river by big boy Scottish salmon river standards, a truly beautiful clear river - punctuated by boulders, rock pools and stones - but a river that could nevertheless be difficult and bitchy.

Easterbrook, despite being retired, was like a mountain goat. He would say "Let's cross the river" and I would think "Where?" and he would simply skip, jump and stride from one slippery rock to another. Impressive.

We met him at Two Bridges.



ANNALISA BARBIERI
ON FISHING

Easterbrook packed our lunch and extra clothes in his back pack and off he strode, his long walking staff in one hand and rods in the other. Not even the extra weight of our provisions slowed him down.

We walked for an hour to get to

the part of the river from where we were to begin fishing, trekking through some awesome scenery. We passed through Beardown, the last place on Dartmoor where bears were seen, now long gone, and then saw the West Dart waiting for us in the valley below.

When we reached the river Easterbrook set up our rods, while we stood far back from the river so as not to scare the fish. These were no fat, Champneys-reared trout but wild and magnificent brownies who made news if they reached three pounds: there's no rich pickings here to feed off and life is hard. Hence the West Dart rears tough little fish, who are some of the finest I have ever seen, but they are difficult to fool.

Easterbrook's biggest trout from this river: 4 1/2lb, some 25 years ago uses a 10ft Alken rod with a 3lb breaking strength line and a very light, long leader. Usually (and he's

been fishing the Dartmoor rivers for more than 50 years) he would put three flies on at once, but this is quite advanced and tricky so we used one fly only.

Then we were off. Easterbrook put the two of us on separate stretches of water and we were to leapfrog each other so as not to fish the same pool twice. It was at this point that I realised this was going to be no ordinary experience. Fishing Dartmoor rivers is arduous, the terrain is - like its fish - completely wild. You flick a fly into the water a few times and then immediately move on a few steps because you will have fished that water and spooked the fish.

But these few steps aren't easy. There's either a rock to climb over, or a hole to not fall into, a quagmire to avoid or some general topsy-turvy to send you off balance. And all the time you have to keep your fly in the air while walking.

I lost count of the number of pot-holes I fell into. One minute I was talking to Easterbrook, the next my right leg had disappeared into the earth up to my thigh. "Don't break your leg," Easterbrook said, "we're five miles from the nearest house."

At one point, surrounded by quagmires of unknown depth which I could not try out with my stick (essential on Dartmoor) because Easterbrook had inadvertently gone off with it, I really wished I was anywhere but on the banks of the West Dart. But then I caught my first brownie of the day - despite breaking all the rules and casting over the same spot some 12 times because I couldn't move anywhere else - and he was beautiful. Only a matter of ounces but I could have entered him for any trout beauty contest.

I raised maybe five more fish from the same spot, all on a size 16 Black Pennell. So much for theories: fish always surprise you.

Easterbrook could see I was having a hard time of it and decided to take me a bit more up river where things were, according to him, easier. As my knees touched my chin on a particularly steep ascent up the bank, Easterbrook asked me what terrain I was used to. "Pavements and carpets," I joked. "Just as well I didn't take you to the East Dart," he smiled, "it's really wild there."

I gently explained that definitions were blurred. To Easterbrook the jungle is probably a nice warm place with a few leaves and some interesting noises.

We passed Wistman's Wood, a medieval forest with its mysterious gnarled, lichen-draped trees that grow out of bleak, rocky soil. You cannot help but fall in love with Dartmoor and its abandoned, don't-give-a-damn beauty. For lunch we found a bit of level ground and I nibbled on my delicious pasty from the

Home Made Cake Shop in Tavistock (highly recommended) and thought how I too could keep up with Mr E and skip across rivers using boulders as stepping stones.

As the pure, bracing air slapped my cheeks I followed Easterbrook to another spot. He led me through five-foot-long grass. "All I can see is your hat!" chuckled Easterbrook as he looked behind him. "As long as you can still see that," I thought, "a quagmire won't have claimed me."

The afternoon wore on with me catching two more glorious, perfect brownies on a Brian's Green Fly and a Half Stone. The day ended at about five, Easterbrook, with his clippers on an old bit of string round his neck, fair skipped away while I, exhausted but exhilarated, watched him go. The West Dart, beautiful, difficult and wild as she is, gave me the best day's fishing I've ever had.

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**Going out
with
a nuclear
bang.**

... ..

Ladbrokes
For a bet, Ladbrokes are favourite.

FORM GUIDE

Memphis Dancer: Not recovered from a slow start at Newbury and was short of room on previous start at Chelsoe. Longer trip today should suit. Munro: Dropped away (seventh of eight) after leading at Apr test time. Foster ground today but would not seem good enough.

FORM GUIDE

Instatutions: Needs to be held up for late run. Handicap mark has shot up for a Doncaster win last September but should be spot on after two runs.

Kadamsman: Former Irish winner who showed little in two races on these shores in 1966.

Last seen over hurdles in March

Subsequent form: Keel on elements in last District Point at October 78 and has since

FORM GUIDE

Waiting Knight: Some promise shown in maidens but a big flop when last of three to Spring Fever at Apr last time. Handicapped on early season 2nd to Chertan.

appearance outing in a
possibly not up to this task

Flash: Third to Yamal and Sweet Pea on reappearance and in Listed race next time. Had big weight when unplaced at Salisbury last time and has a.w. chance. Ron's Pet: Has won just once from 12 starts but closely matched at the weights with Minette on early-season form. Better for his latest attempt and could surprise.

Anguish of a champion on verge of collapse

IT'S A crying shame for Marco Pantani that this year's Tour de France will be remembered as much for night raids and protest pull-outs as for what should, barring disasters, be a fantastic victory especially as his achievement hinges upon two of the most enthralling days' racing for years. Not for the first time, the brevity of Channel 4's highlights programme was exposed as ruthlessly as last year's winner, Jan Ullrich, on his nightmare day in the mountains. As the police swooped throughout the week and the peloton began to resemble a Second World War convoy being picked off by U-boats, the C4 team struggled to contain the off-road developments as well as all the action in their piddling daily half-hour.

Early on in Monday's crucial stage, won by Pantani to take yellow, Ullrich had been attacked six



CHRIS
MAUME
SPORT ON TV

or seven times by riders who must have sensed his growing vulnerability. All this, though, was dismissed in one sentence by Phil Liggett. Part of the problem, I suspect, is the requirement that it should all hang together like a

well-made play, even at the risk of losing the essence. The fear of making a smooth narrative disjointed leads to too many sins of omission.

They should also be more flexible when it comes to Gary Imlach's filmed inserts which lack off the second half of each programme. Monday's for example, concerned the three-times winner, Greg LeMond, who was back for the first time since he retired, leading a group of Americans paying a few thousand dollars to see the Tour with their hero. All mildly interesting, except that the C4 team's intentions of filming the party as they handled a climb came to nothing when the American and his charges took a wrong turning. On a day as exciting as Monday they should surely have dropped the dead Yankees.

Still, when they got back to the

action, it was gripping. In driving rain and wet-blanket mist, Pantani pulled a way on the steepest climb of this year's Tour, the 8,500ft Col du Galibier, accelerating up hills as smoothly as most other human beings on the flat. Ullrich, poor bloke, punctured at the foot, and when he resumed seemed to have been debilitated by his delay in the spirit-sapping rain. "He's going to have to take it like a time trial," said Liggett's co-commentator, Paul Sherwen. No chance. As Pantani powered his way home, the German was done for. A particularly cruel edit cut from the Italian to Ullrich and his team-mates, about five minutes behind. It was like going from the Keystone cops to one of those pointless pop videos filmed entirely in slow-motion.

Finally, Ullrich cracked. His team-mates, Bjarne Riis and Udo

Bolts, rode just in front of him, bellying at him to carry on. A motorbike camera pulled alongside and held Ullrich's profile for what seemed like half an hour. His face, normally so free and boyish yet focused and self-confident, was scarred with pain – not just the physical agony in his legs and torso, but the anguish of a champion on the verge of collapse. There were bags under his eyes the size of Willie Whitelaw's. He looked 100 years old.

On Tuesday, though, he was back, as though the previous day's wipe-out had been erased from history. On the slopes of the Madeleine, the last big climb of the Tour, he attacked, pulling away like Michael Schumacher leaving, say, Toranosuke Takagi breathing in his exhaust fumes. No one could live with him. Except Pantani. In Ullrich's pink jersey and the Italian's

maillot jaune, the pair looked like a slice of Battenburg cake as they took the stage by the throat. Ullrich leading the way, Pantani never more than a few inches behind. There was pain etched on the German's face again, but this time it was the determined grimace of a man in control. Phil Liggett recalled the great duelling days of Eddie Merckx and Jacques Anquetin: "It's a wonder what he thinks as he sees them coming," Liggett said as the pair overtook the lone breakaway man, Stéphane Heulot. "It's the TGV and I don't think I've got a ticket for this ride," Liggett suggested.

All the drug coverage meant that Channel 4 was unable to devote any time to telling us a bit about Pantani. Their magazine fills in a few details, though: he rode nearly 4,500 miles in winter training, and

his favourite food is pancakes with chocolate spread (I have to say I like the second of those as an exercise to better than the first). Three other snippets stand out: his bandana is his most treasured piece of equipment, his favourite music is the Eagles, the best part of the job for him is all the message, and the worst part is the stress. Presumably the stress of listening to the Eagles, if he only but knew it. Somebody should have a word.

The magazine also, incidentally, contains an optimistic forecast from the Tour director, Jean-Marie Leblanc. "Who will be the chosen champion this year?" he asks. "As long as he is the best, and there are no hitches along the way, that will be enough for us." Oops. By the end, the peloton limped to Paris, down to around 100 riders, it was almost a hitch too far.

Broncos target St Helens in summit assault

RUGBY LEAGUE

LONDON BRONCOS and Warrington both have St Helens in their sights as Super League comes home this weekend.

Saints, racked by internal problems, are the vulnerable stragglers in the top five and the two chasing clubs who meet at Warrington this afternoon – plus Sheffield Eagles – must feel that they have a chance of catching them.

London would be happier if they had Martin Offiah fit to return, but the game against Wigan next week is now his target. Wes Cotton is also injured, so a reshuffle in the backs sees Chris Ryan on the wing and Glen Ait on stand-off.

The Broncos' new forward from South Sydney, Shane Milard, is on the bench after arriving from Australia.

"I am so keen to prove myself to Tony Currie and the team, especially with the Broncos playing the way they are," he said. "I have always wanted to play in the English competition, but to do so alongside internationals

like Mark Carroll and Shaun Edwards is a huge bonus."

Warrington have a number of injury legacies from their defeat by Castleford in Cardiff, not least Lee Briers' shoulder. Neither side should make up ground on Saints tomorrow, as the bottom club, Huddersfield, are the visitors to Knowsley Road.

Saints are without Brett Goldspink, resting what his coach, Shaun McRae, describes as "a chronic ankle injury" – something that will be of concern to Wigan, who have signed him for next season.

McRae has also been told that he cannot select Bobbie Goulding, suspended by the club for allegedly abusing a team-mate in Swansea. There is rich irony in that, in view of the way McRae has urged the board to take a firmer line with Goulding in the past.

Sean Long and Tommy Martyn are the half-backs in his absence, while Vila Matautia is likely to make his first appearance of the season from the bench, despite being sent off for fighting in his comeback match

in the A team after recovering from a broken arm.

Phil Veivers, caretaker coach at Huddersfield, goes back to a ground where he spent 12 seasons without his best forward, Neil Harmon, who was sold to Bradford this week. Harmon and the Bulls' other new signing, Nathan McAvoy, are in the starting line-up against Sheffield.

"There will be two disappointed players in the squad, but we needed that competition for spots," said the Bradford coach, Matthew Elliott.

Bradford, could also slip out of the play-off picture, will be without Bernard Dwyer for a month after knee surgery. Simon Knox makes his first start of the season in the second row.

Leeds have Marc Glanville back at Castleford, but Tony Kemp has joined Adrian Morley on the sidelines so Iestyn Harris plays in his favourite stand-off position for the first time in Super League this season. Marcus St Hilaire, normally an impact player from the bench, starts at full-back.



Wally Armstrong finds trouble on the first hole at Wentworth yesterday during the second round of the Schroder Senior Masters

Peter Jay

Hull sails forth after 139

SNOOKER

ROBIN HULL, who makes a habit of reserving his best form for the Grand Prix, convincingly booked a place in the fourth qualifying round of the £70,000 world-ranking event at Plymouth yesterday.

The 23-year-old former world junior champion from Finland highlighted a 5-1 victory over Edinburgh's Craig MacGilvray with a 139 total clearance in the third frame of the contest.

That puts Hull, who coincidentally tied in a career-best run of 145 during the 1994 Grand Prix, in line to collect a pre-televised highest break bonus of £1,100.

Hull now meets Hong Kong's reigning world amateur champion, Marco Fu, in the fourth round and needs to negotiate two more matches to secure an appearance at the tournament proper in Preston in October.

Proton pair in hospital

MOTORSPORT

JENNY DAVIES and her co-driver Claire Mole, of the Proton team, were taken to hospital yesterday after being involved in a crash which halted the Stena Line Ulster Rally.

The pair collided with a tree on the second stage of the event, which is the penultimate round of the Mobil 1 British Championship. Neither competitor was believed to be seriously hurt, although Mole was thought to have suffered a back injury.

The second stage was abandoned because of the crash and each competitor was given a notional time before they headed on to section three.

There was some compensation for Proton in that David Mann, the non-works Persona driver, had set the joint fastest time in the opener with Toyota's Jonny Milner. Their Group N cars had obtained more grip on the wet roads than the Cham-

pionship contenders. The two-litre entries were headed by Tapio Laukkanen's Renault.

The Brazilian Flavio Figueiredo is to drive John Cleland's Vauxhall Vectra in this weekend's two rounds of the Auto Trader RAC British Touring Car Championship at Thruxton after the Scot pulled out through injury. The twice British Touring Car champion, sixth in the standings this year, broke a rib at Snetterton last Sunday and despite pain-killing injections he has had to withdraw from the race.

Cleland said: "I'm bitterly disappointed. I'm sure we could have competed well at Thruxton and scored a lot of points. This is the first time in 10 years I've missed a Touring Car race. It's never happened before and it feels very strange."

Figueiredo, one of the leading Vauxhall Vectra Challenge drivers, said: "It is a very good chance for me to show what I can do in a Touring Car."

Rose's mark matched by talent of Gossett

GOLF

ZIMBABWE'S NICK Price issued a warning to his rivals after recovering from a first-hole bogey to tie the Americans Paul Azinger and Russ Cochran for the lead after the opening round at the FedEx St. Jude Classic on Thursday.

Price hooked his tee shot into the water at the first hole, but that was his only blemish as he compiled a six-under 68 in steamy conditions at the Southwind TPC. The highlight of his round was an eagle at the par-five 18th, where he hit a three-wood to three feet.

Price, Azinger and Cochran were one stroke ahead of Donnie Hammond, Scott Hoch, Mark Carnevale and the 19-year-old amateur David Gossett, who matched Justin Rose for the lowest round by an amateur on the PGA Tour this year.

Azinger's score owed more credit to accurate approach shots than to a hot putter. He

made five birdies and an eagle, but only sank two putts from outside five feet.

Gossett, meanwhile, revealed his rich talent with five birdies in the first nine holes on his home course. He got to six under with a birdie at the 16th, before making his only bogey of the day at the 17th, where he sank an eight-footer to avoid dropping two strokes.

The American Junior Golf Association Player of the Year, he has just graduated from nearby Germantown High School and has accepted a golf scholarship at the University of Texas.

He nearly qualified for the past two US Opens, missing by one stroke each time in sectional qualifying.

The England internationalals Brett Taylor and Ben Mason both crashed out of the English Amateur Championship to leave the semi-finals a seed-free zone at Woodhall Spa yesterday.

Taylor, from the Thorpe Hall

club in Essex, was never ahead in his match against Simon Peter Gorry, an 18-year-old Middlesex county player from Sudbury.

Gorry was two up at the turn and then went three up with a birdie at the par-five 14th and that was sufficient to see him to a three and two success.

In the first of the semi-finals Gorry will meet Neil Ride-wood from Orsett in Essex, who finished his match in style by bolting a tricky birdie putt at the 17th for a two and one win over Newcastle's David Errington.

Mason, from Sand Moor in Leeds, was bundled out five and four by Manchester's Roger Smithies, who was two up after eight holes and then took the next three in succession as well.

The last semi-final place was booked by Bristol's Mark Sanders, who overcame former England junior star Chris Roake from Gerrards Cross three and two.

Butler prepared to serve up success

THE GREAT Britain and Ireland captain, Ita Butler, believes a strong team spirit could prove crucial to her team's chances of beating America and retaining the biggest prize in amateur women's golf – the Curtis Cup – in Minneapolis this weekend.

The British and Irish side have won the event only six times since its inception in 1932, although they have dominated affairs over recent years, having won four shared one and lost just once since 1986.

Butler's team have been in Spain over recent weeks to get to know each other and to become familiar with the fast greens they will encounter in America. Butler feels the trip has been beneficial and is confident of her players' abilities.

"I won't predict the outcome but I will say that if anyone makes a slip on the course they will pay the price," she said. "We have an excellent team spirit. The girls love the course and are playing well, so we will tackle the match as well prepared as we can possibly be."

At the last tournament in Killarney, the home team were

winners by a convincing 11-6 margin and three players from that team are in this year's line-up: Elaine Ratcliffe and Karen Supples who are both 25, and Alison Rose who at 30 is the senior member of the team.

Making debut appearances are Kim Rostrom from Clitheroe and Hoylake's Fiona Brown – both 24 years old – Rebecca Hudson, who at 19 is the youngest in the side, Scotland's Hilary Monaghan and Becky Morgan from Wales.

The holders are a youthful side compared to the Americans, who have in their team the 49-year-old Carole Semple Thompson, who is making a record 10th appearance since 1974.

Ratcliffe and Supples will be making their last appearances at the amateur event as they have announced their plans to turn professional in a fortnight's time.

Ratcliffe of the Sandyway Club in Cheshire and Supples from Royal Cinque Ports in Kent intend to stay in America to compete in the US Amateur Championship at Barton Hills before moving into the paid ranks.

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Courtenay will stay

ICE HOCKEY

SHEFFIELD STEELERS yesterday clinched the eleventh round signing of Ed Courtenay, with the Canadian star signing a new two-year deal after having originally said his good-byes to the club two weeks ago.

Courtenay looked set to return to his former club South Carolina Stingrays in the East Coast Hockey League, swayed by the offer of a green card which would have guaranteed him future employment in the United States at the end of his contract.

But Steelers' Sekonda Superleague rivals Cardiff Devils, upon hearing of Courtenay's decision to leave Sheffield, decided to try and tempt the forward with a lucrative offer of their own.

However, the Steelers team

manager, Dave Simms, refused to let the Devils woo last season's leading scorer away from the club and decided to make a renewed offer.

"This is fantastic news for Sheffield, I think Ed looked at the package we are trying to put together at the club this season and so chose to return," Simms said. "We've got Ken Priestley coming back and having signed the likes of Derek Laxdale, Ed's signing now completes the final piece of our player jigsaw."

Newcastle Riverkings have bolstered their squad with the addition of playmaker Eric Royal. The Newcastle coach, Alex Dempsey, will be hoping Royal can recreate the partnership he enjoyed with the Riverkings' Rob Trumbley when the pair played for Wheeling in the East Coast Hockey League.

GOLDWOOD		RACING RESULTS	
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Selectors to keep faith with England

BY DEREK PRINGLE

THE ENGLAND selectors, at last able to bask in some late summer glory, look certain to announce an unchanged 12 for the final Test against South Africa at Headingley next Thursday. With the series tantalisingly poised at 1-1, England know they have the team and the momentum to win a series that only a month ago looked beyond them.

The optimistic mood has also manifested itself in ticket sales. After a slow start, interest has reached the point where there are few tickets left for the Friday and Saturday, traditionally the best attended days.

If the public has any misgivings about going to watch live cricket, it

has probably less to do with England's inconsistency than the alcohol ban placed on the Western Terrace by the Headingley authorities and Yorkshire police.

A perennially rowdy part of the ground, the specific ban on the Western Terrace - spectators in other areas will be allowed to bring in four cans per head - is more likely to incense than control. Although unpopular, bans on alcohol should be total and this one is needlessly provocative.

Aside from the peevish comments of Chris Lewis, this has been a good week for English cricket. First, Alec Stewart and his men showed they had it in them to win the tough sessions to beat South Africa. Then the counties, disre-

garding their own requirements, agreed to rest some of the weary warriors who had accomplished it.

This kind of co-operation between the counties and the selectors - who will also announce an English Counties side to play South Africa in a one-day match before the Triangular tournament - has long been seen as a necessity to furthering England's cause on the pitch. A goodwill gesture at present, such assistance from the counties would surely dry up under a two-divisional system, unless Test players were contracted centrally to the England and Wales Cricket Board.

So far, refusals to rest players by the counties have been negligible, though it has mainly been batsmen rather than bowlers (not something

intended when it was first mooted) who have tended to benefit most. Michael Atherton and Nasser Hussain are the batsmen to have been given the "excuse" note. Both are deserving cases after playing long innings under great pressure, efforts which would have left them mentally as well as physically drained.

The pair also suffer from bad backs. Atherton's is a long standing problem, while Hussain's is a recently diagnosed stress fracture, possibly a legacy from his days as a leg-spinner. Both complaints will benefit from a few days' rest.

Angus Fraser, the other vital cog in England's win at Trent Bridge, is also putting his feet up. Fraser bowled 54 overs at Trent Bridge and the tall seamer will surely be grate-

ful that Middlesex have given him the match against Sri Lanka off. One of the reasons Fraser bowled so much, apart from the fact that he looked like taking wickets, was the profligacy of Ian Salisbury back in the Test side with a remodelled action.

Clearly nervous, Salisbury was exposed by Hansie Cronje, who cleverly never allowed him to settle. In some ways Cronje's actions were probably a sign that South Africa rate Salisbury who, despite improvements for Surrey this season, was done few favours by the well-grassed nature of the pitch.

In the meantime, Salisbury should be persevered with, though Headingley's traditional seamer-friendly surface may mean that Alan Mullally may finally reap the re-

wards of his steady improvement this season. A four-pronged seam attack is not out of the question at Headingley. Not long ago it was the norm, and only the fact that this Test is in August, not June, will make the selectors pause for thought.

In any case, with both Mark Ramprakash and Graham Hick able to bowl decent spells of off-spin, an attack of four front-line seamers plus Andrew Flintoff is not out of the question. As always, much will depend on the pitch and weather forecast nearer the time.

A big, burly young man, Flintoff enjoyed a happy debut. Apart from the excitement of a first Test win, the Lancashire player did not look out of place. Indeed, if he can bring some of the discipline extant in his bowl-

ing to his batting, and become more selective over which ball to bowl, the ripples accompanying his jump into the deep end may yet reach wave proportions.

The fearlessness of youth is something Hick only ever felt prior to his England career, which was given another chance to flourish at Trent Bridge. In good form for his county, Hick's comeback knock was brief, as he bottom-edged an attempted pull shot on his stumps.

An unfortunate dismissal in anyone's book, Hick was nevertheless treated to a vicious, personal and wholly unjustified attack in a popular Sunday paper. Providing he is picked, there will never be a better time or place than Headingley next week for Hick to make his reply.

Smith hits reminder of good old days

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN
at Southampton

Hampshire v Durham

EVER GRAHAM Gooch was moved to congratulate Robin Smith on his stunning hundred, "Not a bad knock," the England selector managed. "It's going to cost Hampshire a fortune in pocket boards." The former England captain, who was on the ground as much in his capacity of batting consultant to Durham as anything else, was referring to the venom and power of the 24 fours which thudded incessantly against the hoardings in Smith's flawless innings of 134.

It was only Smith's second century of a season in which he has either been hampered by injury or by the weather. But yesterday nothing could stop him, certainly not the Durham bowlers or fielders. For some Hampshire old-timers it was his best innings since his hundred against the Australians in 1993. Smith was not so certain if it was his best knock, all he would say after his brisk 126-ball effort was: "I was delighted with the way I played."

"I particularly enjoyed playing like that in front of Goochie. I was totally inspired by the fact that he was here. I have enormous respect for him as a player and as a friend."

Smith made it clear out in the middle, then afterwards, that he has not given up hope

of an England return - his last appearance was in January 1996 against South Africa in Cape Town - but on the evidence of this, his 55th First Class hundred, he has lost none of his faculties in that intervening period. And he does have 4,236 Test runs at an average of 43.

If Durham tended to bowl a little too short at him all the better, it allowed Smith room to batter the boards off the back foot. He was equally punishing on the front foot, though, and hit some exquisite drives back past the bowler. He reached three figures off just 87 balls, having hooked a six off Paul Collingwood and hit 18 of his fours on the way to the mark.

Surprisingly, given his tally of centuries, it was his first against Durham. He now only needs a hundred against Middlesex to complete the set - and the two sides meet here at the end of this month.

Smith was given admirable support by the in-form wicket-keeper Adrian Aymes, whose First Class average is 52. He passed fifty again and in the process shared in a fifth wicket stand of 159 with Smith in a mere 34 overs. Smith and Aymes were both caught behind by Martin Speight, two of a clutch of victims for the Sussex man. Hampshire hammered home their advantage by collecting a fourth batting bonus point and established a 193-run first-innings lead over Durham.

Kent struggle as Cork finds a perfect mix

BY MIKE CAREY
Derbyshire v Kent

BATTING MAY HAVE been problematic at times here yesterday, but it was never as difficult as Kent made it appear. The way they dissipated a good start suggested a side lacking form and confidence and Derbyshire followed up a disciplined bowling performance by nudging towards a first innings lead with three wickets down.

Steve Marsh, the Kent captain, obviously had no qualms about batting first on a pitch that had been under wraps the previous day. It was firm and dry, though, and there was no hint of the pitfalls ahead when David Fulton and Ed Smith put on a free-wheeling 70 together.

At that stage much of the bowling was either too short or too full. Both openers made the most of it but the game changed when Dominic Cork, switching his bowlers around, hit upon the right combination in Phil DeFreitas and the left-arm Kevin Dean, each benefiting from the cross breeze.

Dean, aged 22, was playing league cricket until three years ago but, with his ability to bring the ball back into the right-hander, has probably been the revelation of Derbyshire's season. Moreover, his medium pace was perfectly suited to this pitch and in 12 deliveries he took three wickets for five runs.

In one over he persuaded Fulton and Trevor Ward to edge to slip. Then Smith was palpalably low playing across a full-length inswinging, all of which triggered off a series of misadventures by the Kent middle-order. Nigel Long, making his first appearance of the season, was also leg-before, somewhat surprisingly padding up to an inswinger. The bowler was DeFreitas, who then opened up Mark Ealham to have him caught at slip. When Carl Hooper was caught down the leg side as he tried to whip Dean through midwicket, it was a bonus for Derbyshire but it meant no way back for Kent.

It got worse for Kent as Julian Thompson had to go off for stitches in his chin and a probable visit to the dentist after ducking into a ball from Cork, who bowled well but emerged wicketless; you might say that he did not quite enjoy the luck he experienced at Trent Bridge.

Thompson, though probably shaken, was able to return and bowl later. By then, although the sun had appeared and the ball probably moved around less, both Michael Slater and Michael May needed their share of good fortune in an opening partnership of 79.

Ealham, with his changes of pace, eventually got them both but Kim Barnett and Robin Western dug in as the total passed three figures.



Daryll Cullinan, of South Africa, lashes out against Essex on his way to 157 at Chelmsford yesterday

Allsport

Amiable Bates lacks Saqlain's bite

BY HENRY BLOFIELD
at The OvalSussex 125 & 59-4
Surrey 364

SAQLAIN MUSTAFAQ and Justin Bates both bowled breaks and both toiled away from the Pavilion End: there are no other similarities. Bates took 5 for 100 in 36 overs while Saqlain had 7 for 30 in 19.2 overs on Thursday, but, without Bates, Sussex would not have restricted Surrey's lead to 229 even though it will be more than enough for them.

While Saqlain is the best off-spinner in the world, Bates is an amiable exponent of the gentle art who was helped by a turning pitch without being able to take real advantage of it. His control is not good enough and his sting not sharp enough to cause good batsmen more than a passing problem or two.

This may all seem an overstatement of the glaringly obvious and mildly unkind, but it is not often one gets the chance to compare a world champion with a young, enthusiastic and

willing learner. The best thing Bates can have done in this match is to have watched every ball Saqlain has bowled and then to have cornered him in the bar for a chat.

If he has learned from Saqlain, Sussex's journey to the Oval will not have been wasted. While Saqlain has been the main difference between the two sides, he has not been the only one. Surrey have played like potential champions while Sussex have looked fortunate to have started this round of matches in seventh

place, 51 points behind Surrey. For all that, Sussex have done wonderfully well to regroup as they have this season. For a time, they rose to second place and although a position in mid-table is the best they can hope for, they have this summer established a satisfactory springboard for the future.

The second day's play went according to the script. It began with an array of strokes from Alec Stewart although the prompter missed his cue when Stewart had reached 90 and was low trying to work to leg a

ball from Mark Robinson which kept low. He did so again later, when Alistair Brown was 94 and drove Bates to short mid-on.

At one point, Surrey were 193-6 before Brown and Martin Bicknell added 115 for the sixth wicket and Saqlain showed that he can also bat better than Bates.

Bicknell then took the first two Sussex second innings wickets before Saqlain had the two left-handers, Toby Peirce and Michael Devan caught at slip and, at 59 for 4, Sussex are still 180 behind.

SCOREBOARD

Britannic Assurance County Championship Derbyshire v Kent

DERBY (Day 2 of 4): Derbyshire (4pts) are trailing Kent (1) by 37 runs with seven first-innings wickets in hand. Derby won toss.

Kent won toss.

First Innings

	Runs	Wickets	Extras
O P Fulton c Clarke b Dean	28	0	3
E T Smith b Dean	34	0	6
T R Ward c Slater b Dean	0	0	4
C L Hooper c Krikken b Dean	28	0	22
N J Long b De Freitas	1	0	8
M A Ealham c Cork b De Freitas	1	0	8
M V Fleming c Roberts b De Freitas	0	0	43
*S A Marsh b De Freitas	4	0	10
J B Thompson not out	8	0	39
O W Hildreth not out	3	0	7
M J McGee b De Freitas	0	0	1
Extras (b5 nb20)	25		
Total (43.2 overs)	168		
Fall: 1-70, 2-70, 3-85, 4-90, 5-100, 6-104, 7-111, 8-154, 9-165			
Bowling: O G Cork 10-2-39-0, P A J De Freitas 18-2-35-5, K J Dean 12-2-52-4, O M Roberts 3-0-14-0			

Derbyshire - First Innings

	Runs	Wickets	Extras
A J Slater c Marsh b Ealham	0	2	73
M R May b Ealham	19	0	3
R M S Weston not out	44	0	6
K J Barnett c Marsh b Headley	21	0	2
M E Cassar not out	8	0	0
Extras (b5 nb2)	12		
Total (for 5, 42.1 overs)	125		
Fall: 1-44, 2-79, 3-121			
To bat: V P Clarke, *O G Cork, IK M Krikken, P A J De Freitas, G M Roberts, K J Dean			
Bowling: M J McGee 5-1-16-0, D W Hildreth 10-0-28-1, M V Fleming 12-3-36-0, M A Ealham 11-3-28-2, C L Hooper 1-0-2-0, J B Thompson 3-1-13-0			
Umpires: T E Jessy and D R Shepherd			

Derbyshire v Kent

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

	Runs	Wickets	Extras
J P Stephenson c Speight b Luggan	40	0	106
A C Morris c Speight b Bates	3	0	12
G W White c Gough b Bates	18	0	80
*R A Smith c Speight b Bates	134	1	126
TA N Aymes c Speight b Luggan	54	0	7
A O Mascarenhas b Collingwood	47	0	9
X O James not out	6	0	94
S D Hussey c Collingwood b Wood	8	0	2
N A M McLennan c Gough b Wood	0	0	1
P J Harley not out	1	0	0
Extras (b13 nb2)	24		
Total (for 5, 110.3 overs)	385		
Fall: 1-44, 2-58, 3-90, 4-112, 5-271, 6-292, 7-346, 8-366, 9-366			
Bowling: M M Bates 26-9-67-3, J Wood 25-5-3-102-3, S Luggan 22-5-67-3, M J Foster 3-0-22-0, P O Collingwood 18-8-47-1, M A Gough 16-4-67-0			
Umpires: R Palmer and G Sharp			

Derbyshire v Kent

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

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First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

First Innings

Derbyshire won toss.

Lancashire v Leicestershire

OLD TRAFFORD (Day 2 of 4): Leicestershire (1pt) have scored 218 for 7 against Lancashire (5).

Lancashire won toss.

First Innings

	Runs	Wickets	Extras
J Wells b Wain	23	0	45
D J Maddy c Hegg b Martin	0	0	7
I J Sutcliffe c and b Martin	82	0	5
*P R Smith b Wain	28	0	35
*P V Simmons c Hegg b Chapple	0	1	18
A Habbis c McKeown b Martin	56	0	123
*P A Nixon not out	42	0	67
O J Millers b Wain	9	0	14
C O Crowe not out	29	1	30
Extras (b2 nb11 w4 nb5)	31		
Total (for 7, 62.5 overs)	218		
Fall: 1-0, 2-37, 3-49, 4-82, 5-155, 6-173			
To bat: M T Brimacombe, A O Mullally			
Bowling: Martin 15.3-5-38-3, P J Martin 15-3-41-3, IO Austin 14-3-30-0, G Chapple 11-2-28-1, A Flintoff 6-2-27-0, M Watkinson 4-0-16-0			
Umpires: G J Burgess and P Wiley			

Nottinghamshire v Northamptonshire

TRENT BRIDGE (Day 2 of 4): Nottingham (4pts) are trailing Northamptonshire (5) by 304 runs with all first-innings wickets in hand.

Northamptonshire won toss.

First Innings

	Runs	Wickets	Extras
J P Taylor c Watson b Sprang	20	0	3
A C Morris c Johnson b Downman	103	0	15
*K R Carr c Sprang b Tolley	18	0	1
A L Penberthy b Sprang	49	0	7
I O G Sales c Sprang b Evans	20	0	34
ID Ripley not out	11	0	23
A Rose c Sub b Sprang	7	0	7
D E Malcolm c Downman b Evans	0	0	8
J F Brown c Archer b Sprang	9	0	8
Extras (b5 nb22)	25		
Total (for 5, 119.5 overs)	248		
Fall: 1-10, 2-105, 3-206, 4-286, 5-322, 6-327, 7-327, 8-335, 9-336			
Bowling: K P Evans 31-6-88-3, M N Bowen 15-2-54-1, C M Tolley 25-7-61-1, P A Sprang 30-5-82-4, M P Downman 14-1-11-1, A Archer 1-1-7-0			
Umpires: J H Hirst and V A Velder			

Nottinghamshire v Northamptonshire

Nottinghamshire won toss.

First Innings

Nottinghamshire won toss.

First Innings

Nottinghamshire won toss.

First Innings

Nottinghamshire won toss.

First Innings

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First Innings

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First Innings

Nottinghamshire won toss.

First Innings

Surrey v Sussex

THE POSTERS' OVAL (Day 2 of 4): Sussex (4 pts) are trailing Surrey (5 pts) by 186 runs with eight second-innings wickets in hand.

Surrey won toss.

First Innings

G A Hick c Gough b Hutchinson	9	0	1	32	48
V S Lokandu low b Hamilton	3	0	0	41	59
J M Massey c Wood b Hamilton	3	0	0	23	29
R J Marshall c Wood b Hamilton	0	0	0	24	31
S J Rhodes not out	16	0	0	58	111
R S Lampert c Blakey b Middlebrook	8	0	0	18	24
R K Williams not out	1	0	0	14	60
Extras (b 2 f 5 b 4 w 1)					
Total (for 7, 47.1 overs)				134	
Fall: 1-58, 2-58, 3-77, 4-87, 5-90, 6-95, 7-125.					
To bat: P J Newport, R J Chapman.					
Bowling: M C Lee 15-1-46-2, M Hutchinson 16-3-39-1, S J Rhodes 16-3-46-0, G M Hamilton 10-4-17-2, R O Stemp 3-0-11-0, J D Middlebrook 3-2-1-1.					
Umpires: K Rudstone and J F Steele.					

Celtic fly flag for new league

The new-style Scottish Premiership starts today with the accent firmly on youth. By David McKinney

FOR THE first time in a decade the league flag will be unfurled at Celtic Park today. However, the briefest of pauses to reflect on the glory of last season's achievement will turn their attention to the forthcoming campaign. The future of Scottish football lies in the new Premiership, with its accent on youth, the winter break and Sunday night football.

As a new regime kicks off the continuing fragmentation of the action will be apparent immediately, as Celtic open against Dunfermline but then have to wait until tomorrow to assess the strengths and weaknesses of Hearts and Rangers, who are expected to be their main rivals for the title.

Today's match represents a first opportunity for Dr Jozef Venglos, the new Celtic coach, to pit his wits against Scottish opponents following the European ties with St Patrick's of Ireland. He will know (someone will have told him by now) that Dunfermline won 2-1 at Celtic Park at this stage last season. Celtic came back to win the league after losing their first two games and will inevitably look for a better start this time.

"I believe in the players and the organisation of this club," Venglos said. "Hopefully we'll take a positive attitude into the game with the flag being presented."

Celtic will be without their Danish duo of Marc Rieper, still recovering from back spasms, and Morten Wieghorst, who is receiving treatment for knee ligament damage.

Dundee, the club promoted from Division One, start their season at home against Aberdeen, who will be hoping that Craig Hignett will exert a telling influence in the midfield following his move from Middlesbrough.

Meanwhile, the Kilmarnock manager, Bobby Williamson, will find out if his side is capable of continuing the form they

showed in beating Zvezdarnik in midweek, when Dundee United visit Rugby Park. "I'll tell you after this match if our new signings are settling into the team pattern," Williamson said.

Alan Mahood scored the only goal against the Bosnian side and much is expected of Ian Durrant, while Williamson is still hoping to entice Durrant's former Rangers team-mate, Ally McColloch, away from Glasgow.

Today's fourth game is at Fir Park where Motherwell host St Johnstone. Hopes are high among the home supporters that the experience of Brian McClair, part of a summer clear-out from Manchester United, will help them avoid the kind of relegation battle they have endured over the last two seasons. There is, however, a completely new look to Motherwell, who released 17 players at the end of last season and have 10 new arrivals.

Hearts and Rangers are the first guinea pigs for the new Sunday night slot, which was the price paid for a huge injection of satellite television money. The new time might take some getting used to by players and supporters alike.

"We'll just have to get on with it and there will be a sell-out crowd for this one, so the fans are certainly giving it their backing," Jim Jefferies, the Hearts manager, said. He added: "We've had a good pre-season but this is when the action really starts."

And so to Rangers, who have bought big over the summer and in Dick Advocaat have the European coach they hope will lead them to success. He starts with the handicap of being without key players Lorenzo Amoruso, Barry Ferguson and Jordan Petric through suspension and he knows from last season that his side face a tough baptism.

"I saw Hearts in a live game and believe them to be an excellent and growing team with a lot of young talent," Advocaat said.

Unsworth 'knew about Everton offer'

JOHN GREGORY, the Aston Villa manager, has hotly disputed David Unsworth's claim that he did not know about Everton's interest in signing him before heading to join Villa. In what will go down as one of the swiftest transfers ever, Unsworth signed for Villa last week, only to turn his back on the club seven days later and rejoin his former side, Everton, in a £2m deal.

Unsworth's wife, who has just given birth to their second child, was unwilling to move from their home in Merseyside, and the player realised the 150-mile round trip to Villa's ground each day was not to his liking. As a result he opted to return to Everton after learning they were interested in signing him for a second time.

"There were only ever two clubs after Unsworth and that was Everton and us," a clearly furious Gregory said yesterday. "He could have stopped for a day and evaluated the situation. He had all the time he wanted to think the decision through. We were perfectly aware of David's situation and the fact that his wife had recently given birth to another child."

Gregory insisted that Villa had done everything they could to make life as easy as possible for Unsworth and his wife.

"David was given six months to relocate to the area, and we were prepared to let him use a club house. We would have put him in a hotel, whatever it took."



Celtic players celebrate Harald Brattbakk's goal against St Patrick's Athletic in their Champions' League first qualifying round victory in Dublin on Wednesday. Today the Scottish champions begin the defence of their domestic crown at home to Dunfermline

Chelsea win race for Finn

CHELSEA HAVE beaten seven leading European clubs to the signature of an exciting young Finnish player, Mikael Forssell. Forssell has joined the West London club on a free transfer.

The 17-year-old student, who scored four goals on his debut for Finland Under-18s against Lithuania on Thursday night, will join the Londoners in November on a five-year contract.

The German-born Forssell is believed to have turned down the chance to join Ajax, Internazionale, Liverpool, Bayer Leverkusen, Bayern Munich, Sampdoria and Rangers in favour of a move to the European Cup-winners' Cup holders.

Forssell is already known to one of his new colleagues, the Chelsea defender Frank Leboeuf. The Finn scored in a practice match in Helsinki against France before the World Cup and he received Leboeuf's shirt as a souvenir after the game.

Forssell said: "I could not believe the number of clubs who wanted me. It was very flattering. I've seen a lot of Eng-

lish football on television and when my parents and I visited London, Chelsea felt right for me."

"I met all the players, from the youth team to the big names, and everyone was so welcoming. It will be marvelous for me to learn from watching and working with players

like Gianfranco Zola, Brian Laudrup and Tore Andre Flo. "It's a dream chance. I'm so excited about my move to Chelsea, but I will continue to do my best for HJK Helsinki until I leave in November."

Chelsea's managing director, Colin Hutchinson, who helped persuade Forssell to join the

London club, added: "We're delighted Mikael has chosen Chelsea. It is part of our policy to bring in young talent with potential."

Forssell joins in a week when Chelsea have also signed the 17-year-old Italian, Luca Percassi. Blackburn yesterday denied reports that Colin Hendry had

been stripped of the club captaincy and ordered to train alone.

A Blackburn statement said: "While the club is determined to remain professional and dignified in this matter, we feel compelled to point out that Colin Hendry has not been stripped of the captaincy because he is not the captain. Our captain is Tim Sherwood. Colin Hendry has not been ordered to train alone. It was agreed in his best interests that he could."

The Nottingham Forest goalkeeper, Marco Pascolo, has joined FC Zurich on loan before a possible permanent move. The 32-year-old former Swiss international, who started his career with Zurich, has made just six appearances for Forest since a £750,000 switch from Italian side Cagliari last summer. Forest have had a £2m offer for the West Bromwich Albion winger, Kevin Kilbane, turned down.

Crystal Palace have completed the signing of the Argentine Under-21 international, Pablo Rodriguez, and Christian Ledesma from Argentina Juniors for £2m.

£60m Owen worth half a plane

THE FULL cost of Michael Owen was reported yesterday to be £60m. Liverpool said that is the figure they want to insure him for, against loss to injury, accident or illness over the next six years of his contract.

That estimation is said to have frightened off insurance companies who are not prepared to take on the risk on the 18-year-old despite a six-figure premium. That reluctance could force Liverpool to half their valuation.

The sum is six times last season's cover against a career-ending injury for the striker, whose profile has soared since his performances for England in France 98, is higher than the

cover for any Premiership player and even eclipses the £20m cover of Ronaldo.

It is based on Owen's transfer value - estimated at around £30m - and his crowd-pulling power as well as his impact on sales of club shirts and other souvenirs.

The latest estimation of Owen's worth leaves other entertainers well behind. Michael Flatley has insured his legs for £25million, Bruce Springsteen insured his voice for £3.5m while Keith Richards has insured the third finger of his left hand for £1m.

Even at that £60m Owen is still worth only half a Boeing 747 but you could buy 387 Rolls

Royces or, if you wanted more tangible proof of wealth, 857 12kg gold bars at £70,000.

Away from the mathematics of modern-day football Owen has admitted he is already getting "fed up" with the pressures of being a World Cup sensation.

"I know it will be like this now for probably the next 10 years, maybe longer," he said as Liverpool arrived in Dublin yesterday for this weekend's Carlsberg Tournament. "It's going to be like this for the rest of my career and there's nothing I can do about it."

"I must admit that I am already getting fed up with it all, but it's the price you have to pay for the position you are in."

Unlucky Rangers to face Salonika in Europe

THE RANGERS manager Dick Advocaat reckons fate could hardly have been crueler to his side in yesterday's Uefa Cup draw.

The groupings were such that the Ajax outfit knew they would face one of four seeds in the second qualifying round draw and, in PAOK Salonika, were paired with the team they feared most.

Apart from the quality of the Greek side, who defeated Arsenal in last season's Uefa Cup, there is the hostility of the field for Rangers to contend with.

Earlier this decade, PAOK Salonika received a two-year ban from European competition because of the behaviour of their fans who have a violent reputation.

Advocaat said: "I think it the worst draw we could have got. They have an excellent team and it will be quite difficult, but we have to do it."

"Every year they fight for the championship and last year Arsenal lost to them over two legs so we will use the tapes of those games."

"It is a hostile stadium and a few years ago they had many problems there and were banned for a couple of years."

PAOK Salonika finished fourth in last season's championship, a repeat of their showing the previous year.

Rangers' only previous meeting with Greek opposition ended in defeat four years ago to AEK Athens. The Ajax side lost both legs of the 1994-95 European Cup preliminary tie - 1-0 at home and 2-0 away.

Kilmarnock, Scotland's other Uefa Cup, hope meet Sigma Olomouc of the Czech Republic as a reward for defeating the Bosnians Zvezdarnik. Sigma Olomouc finished third in their own domestic campaign last term - an improvement from eighth the season before.

The team play in the south-east of the Czech Republic and are based around 150 miles from Prague.

Scotland's Premier League clubs could be handed an extra European place next season if they maintain their record of good behaviour this term.

It could even go to a club that finishes in the bottom half of the league if the behaviour of players, officials and spectators comes out on top of the 'Fair Play' league.

Uefa are conducting a European-wide Fair Play assessment system which will result in a ranking list of top division leagues.

The governing body will give additional Uefa Cup places to the national associations with the best fair play rankings.

Scotland came top of those rankings for 1997-98 season when the assessments were based on the performances of their club sides in Europe.

But this year, every match in the new Premier League will be assessed, with the possible extra place going to the club that wins the domestic Fair Play competition.

The SFA spokesman Andy Mitchell said: "The rules are drawn up by Uefa and they have specified that it is the winner of Fair Play League that gets the extra place."

TRANSFERS

Week commencing 27 July
Vegard Heggem (Norway) to Liverpool; Ian Wright (England) to West Ham; David Connolly (Scotland) to Aston Villa; Marco Materazzi (Italy) to Everton; Neil Redden (Scotland) to Manchester City; Gary Westwood (Wales) to Stockport; Lars Jaeger (Norway) to Parma; Italy to Manchester United; Pablo Rodriguez (Argentina) to Crystal Palace; Christian Ledesma (Argentina) to Crystal Palace; Kevin Kilbane (Ireland) to Blackburn; Tim Sherwood (England) to Blackburn; Colin Hendry (Scotland) to Blackburn; Luca Percassi (Italy) to Blackburn; Harald Brattbakk (Norway) to Celtic; Mikael Forssell (Finland) to Chelsea; Frank Leboeuf (France) to Chelsea; David Unsworth (England) to Everton; John Gregory (England) to Aston Villa; Marco Pascolo (Italy) to Zurich; Kevin Kilbane (Ireland) to Blackburn; Tim Sherwood (England) to Blackburn; Colin Hendry (Scotland) to Blackburn; Luca Percassi (Italy) to Blackburn; Harald Brattbakk (Norway) to Celtic; Mikael Forssell (Finland) to Chelsea; Frank Leboeuf (France) to Chelsea; 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SPORT



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Hill faces £2m Jordan pay cut



Damon Hill protects his ears from the noise during practice yesterday

MOTOR RACING

By DERICK ALLSOP
at Hockenheim

DAMON HILL needed a second glance but it confirmed his disbelieving impression and return to the sharp end of Formula One. His third place in practice for tomorrow's German Grand Prix was also a timely riposte in his negotiations for a new contract with Jordan.

Only the McLaren-Mercedes cars of Mika Hakkinen, the championship leader, and David Coulthard were ahead of Hill at the end of yesterday's session. Michael Schumacher, in his Ferrari, was fifth, Ralf Schumacher in the other Jordan. 10th. Hill's season has lurched from the modest to the downright indifferent and he has yet to score a point. That burden has proved heavier still these past two races because his team-mate has registered points in both.

Compounding his discomfort, Hill

spun off in the British Grand Prix at Silverstone and then expressed his frustration after the team miscalculated his laps in qualifying for last week's Austrian Grand Prix, where he lined up 15th on the grid.

Neither Jordan, nor their engine partners, Mugen-Honda, were amused by the public lauding of dirty linen. The mood changed dramatically yesterday, Hill savouring his work on the track where he has traditionally been strong.

Hill, who completed the day just 0.348 seconds down on Hakkinen, said: "It was very satisfying to see my name in the top three again. This is the most encouraging Friday of the season for me."

"And we're not kidding ourselves either. We did this with plenty of fuel in the tank. The car seems inherently good here and we are knocking on the door of being regular top six runners again. If you look back over a few races we have been building up this kind of momentum and I can see some light at the end of the tunnel."

A good result here tomorrow would palpably strengthen Hill's position more than any performance in practice. He has indicated his preference to continue driving with Jordan, who in turn have stated positively they wish to retain him and Ralf Schumacher.

Hill had an option to stay at the team, but the deadline for him to exercise that right lapsed a fortnight ago. Now the playing field has been levelled, the bargaining muscle is perhaps in Jordan's favour and they appear intent on taking advantage.

It is understood Hill's salary for this season is around £5m, a huge slice of the budget a midfield team like Jordan are able to raise. If Hill is to stay, he may have to be satisfied with nearer £3m for next season.

Eddie Jordan, the team owner, declined to discuss details of their ongoing negotiations, restricting himself to uncontentious comment. "We want Damon to stay and we are

hopeful we can reach agreement," he said. "We want to keep both our drivers. We feel we are going from strength to strength as a team."

Hill still has the option of retiring, or he might be tempted by the likes of the British American Racing team, or Stewart-Ford. He has also been linked with Williams.

He speaks enthusiastically about the potential at Jordan and a strong finish to the season would undoubtedly sharpen his appetite to race on, but more so if he can outpace his young partner.

McLaren have yet to announce their driver line-up for next season, but Coulthard maintains there is no uncertainty in his mind, that he and Hakkinen will again be in tandem.

Coulthard has had to wait for confirmation as rumours of McLaren's approaches to other drivers have continued. A bid for Michael Schumacher he can appreciate: a supposed move for Jacques Villeneuve he finds less logical.

"I'll be glad when it is all an-

nounced and over with," Coulthard admitted. "But it's not something that has concerned me in the least. All I know is what I've been told by the team, and I don't believe they have lied to me."

"I am absolutely certain it will be the same pairing next year, just as I've always been certain it would be."

If there are no further doubts, it seems curious McLaren and Mercedes especially, would not wish to make a statement here. The team say it is "imminent" and that just a few final details have to be sorted. But behind Coulthard's brave face and loyal stance must lurk a degree of unease.

"All I want to do now is focus on my racing," he said. "I want to win as many races as I can before the end of the season and try to at least finish second in the championship."

"I'm reasonably satisfied with the job we have done today and surprised a little bit about our advantage. But our concern on this circuit is reliability. It really pushes the en-

gine to its limit and that could work against us."

Coulthard accepts Hakkinen now leads the McLaren fight against Michael Schumacher. On yesterday's showing the German may not be such a danger in front of his own crowd. The Ferrari had the straight line speed but not the grip through the twisting Stadium section. Another Ferrari-powered car, Jean Alesi's Sauber, was comfortably quicker.

GERMAN GRAND PRIX (Hockenheim): Yesterday's practice times: 1 M Hakkinen (Fin) McLaren-Mercedes 1min 43.346sec (av speed 145.417mph); 2 D Coulthard (GB) McLaren-Mercedes 1:44.138; 3 D Hill (GB) Jordan-Mugen Honda 1:44.294; 4 J Alesi (Fr) Sauber-Petronas 1:44.546; 5 M Schumacher (Ger) Ferrari 1:44.757; 6 E Irvine (Ir) Ferrari 1:44.780; 7 J Villeneuve (Can) Williams-Mecachrome 1:45.186; 8 J Herbert (GB) Sauber-Petronas 1:45.364; 10 R Schumacher (Ger) Jordan-Mugen Honda 1:45.511; 11 J Trulli (It) Prost-Peugeot 1:45.611; 12 A Wurz (Aut) Benetton-Playlife 1:45.843; 13 G Fisichella (It) Benetton-Playlife 1:46.005; 14 M Salo (Fin) Arrows 1:46.163; 15 R Barrichello (Bra) Stewart 1:46.257; 16 O Panis (Fr) Prost-Peugeot 1:46.454; 17 J Agaj (Ukr) Tyrrell-Ford 1:46.743; 18 P Dierke (Bra) Arrows 1:46.803; 19 J Venter (Nth) Simtek-Ford 1:47.086; 20 E Turo (Arg) Minardi-Ford 1:48.175; 21 S Nakano (Japan) Minardi-Ford 1:48.352; 22 R Rosset (Bra) Tyrrell-Ford 1:48.996.

Tour de France: Riders demand action over drug abuse as power surge from Backstedt makes history for Sweden

Riis leads calls for a 'pure sport'

By ROBIN NICHOLL
at Autun, France

RIDERS IN the Tour de France called on the governing body, the Union Cycliste Internationale, to act promptly to clean up the sport in the wake of the drug scandal that has overshadowed the 98th edition of the world's premier cycle race.

"We want a pure sport," said the riders' spokesman, Bjarne Riis on the day that the TVM team quit the Tour with two days to go to the finale on the Champs-Élysées. "The UCI is not here just to write rules and arrange the racing calendar. Together with them we have to sort out this problem which has come out in the Tour."

After Magnus Backstedt became the first Swedish rider to win a Tour stage, Riis went before the media to deny a newspaper story that quoted him as calling Rodolfo Massi "a drugs dealer". Massi had led the Tour's Mountains Grand Prix before he was held for questioning by police investigating alleged drug abuse by Tour riders and was forced to drop out of the race.

"I never said that he was dealing. I am sorry for his team and I hope that Massi will be freed soon," Riis said. "A lot of people think that my team, Deutsche Telekom, do not agree with what the justices are doing. Their work is necessary for cycling."

Riis, who won the 1996 Tour was challenged at the start in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland. The French manager of Massi's Casino team, Vincent Lavenu, asked him if it was true that he had accused the rider of trafficking in drugs. After an Italian rider, Alberto Elli, had also questioned him, Riis asked his team manager, Walter Godefroot, to arrange a media meeting.

"I had said that if Massi was guilty of bringing illegal drugs into the sport it was right that police should investigate," Riis said.

Massi was detained by police on Wednesday at Chambéry, near the French-Italian border, along with Nico Terrados, the doctor with the Spanish team ONCE. Yesterday Massi faced the examining magistrate in Lille the centre of the inquiry into the case regarding the Festina team, which was thrown out of the Tour after drugs were found in a team car.

The remaining five riders of the TVM team did not start yesterday, and a team official, Guido van Calster, said that it was the riders' decision. "They are not mentally and physically capable of racing," he said, in a statement broadcast on Radio Tour, the race's link with its huge workforce and media.

Four TVM riders were subjected to medical tests on police instructions on Wednesday. TVM's manager, Coes Priem, and their team doctor, Alexandre Mikhailov, are being held on drugs related charges.

The first casualty outside the Tour was the prestigious Critérium de France, one of the first big-money appearance races for leading Tour riders. The sponsors called off the race, which was due to run at Château Chalon on Monday. Yesterday 13 riders made the 19th stage their showpiece. The Frenchman Jacky Durand, already a stage winner, raced off in the first kilometre, and after 70km he had 12 others to help him build a lead that had soared to 18min 38sec by the finish.

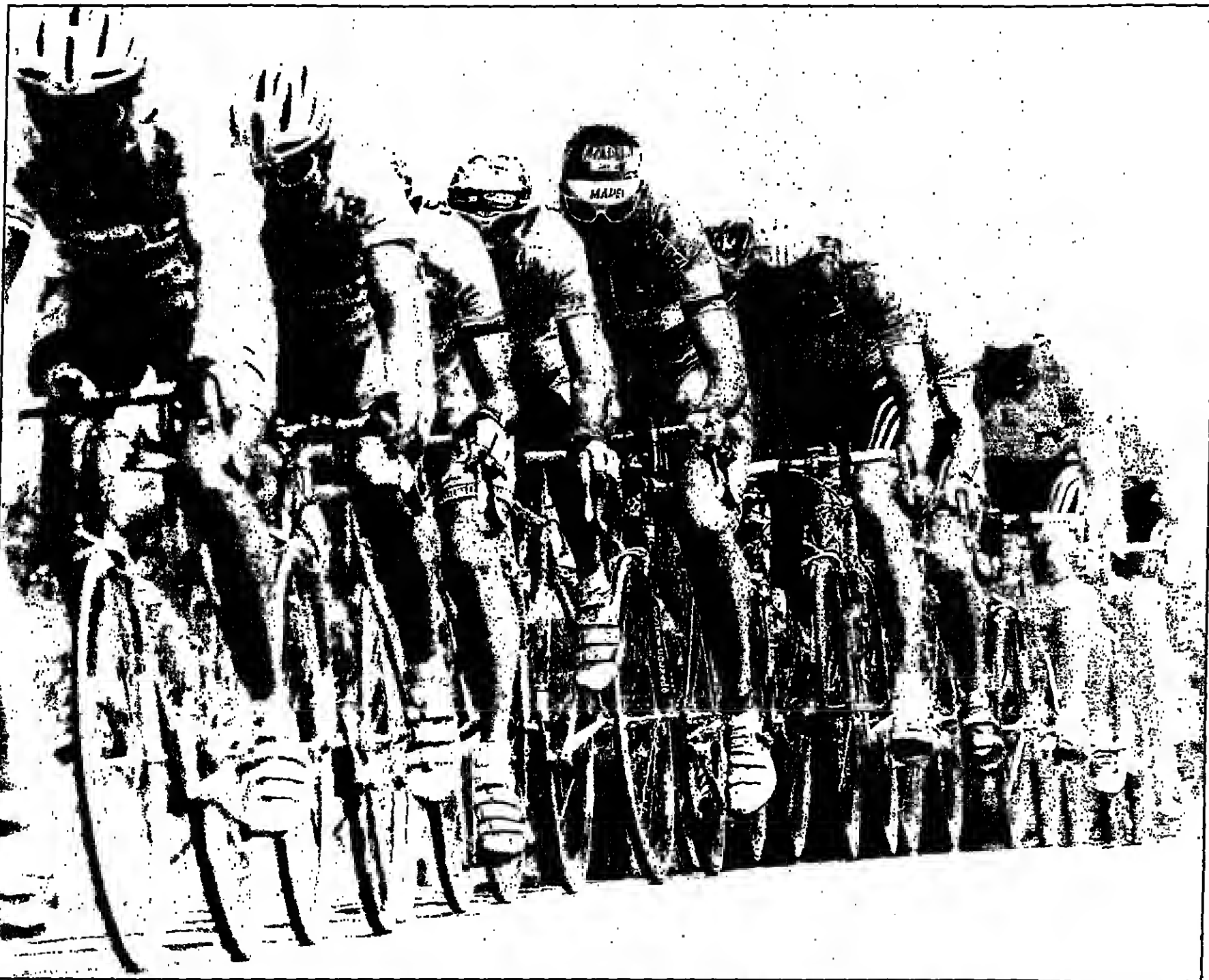
The Italian race leader, Marco Pantani, and his closest rivals were unperturbed. The Frenchman Thierry Bourguignon came nearest to posing a threat, and he was more than 37 minutes adrift of the yellow jersey position.

Pascal Deranié, sporting purple-dyed hair, broke up the party 16km from Autun when his attack took four riders away to contest a sprint finish. As they sped through valleys of Burgundy vineyards and on to the breeding ground of the Charollais, the quartet opened a lead that was comfortable enough to allow them to finesse in the finishing straight.

Then the pure power of the Swede swept all before him as Backstedt edged out the Dutchman Maarten den Bakker the Italian Eddy Mazzoleni, and the colourful Deranié, of the US Postal Service team, to create a little piece of Swedish sporting history.

"I am just overwhelmed. I cannot believe that I have won," said Backstedt, who once used cycling to improve his fitness for downhill skiing, but realised that his cycling was better than his alpine skills.

There is very little downhill left in the Tour. Today Pantani faces the challenge of a 52km time-trial into



The yellow jersey of the Tour leader, Marco Pantani, is sandwiched in the pack during yesterday's 150-mile stage through Burgundy to Autun

AFP

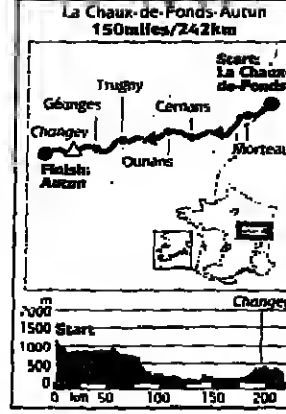
Le Creusot. His 5min 52sec advantage over the American Bobby Julich and 5:56 over last year's winner, the German Jan Ullrich, may take a battering. Each respectively took 3:03 and 4:21 out of the Italian in a 58km time trial at the end of the first week, but racing over the Pyrenees and the Alps will have blunted the speed of Julich and Ullrich.

The International Olympic Committee, galvanised by the Tour de France drug scandals, have called a special executive committee meeting on 20 August 20 to discuss how best to deal with the problem of the use of illegal drugs in sport.

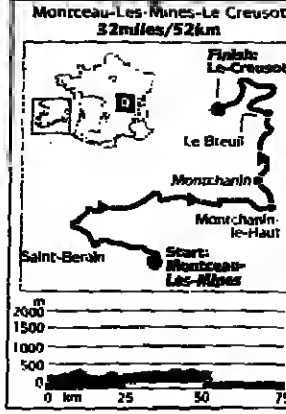
TOUR RESULTS

TOUR DE FRANCE 19th stage (150 miles, Mouchal, Switzerland, Fr) 1 M Backstedt (Swe) 5:56 2 B Julich (US) 6:01 3 J Ullrich (Ger) 6:05 4 C Rinero (Fr) 6:10 5 M Boegard (Neth) 6:15 6 A Tarkenton (It) 6:20 7 S O'Grady (Aus) 6:25 8 J Gaudin (Fr) 6:30 9 J Agaj (Ukr) 6:35 10 J Venter (Nth) 6:40 11 J Trulli (It) 6:45 12 A Wurz (Aut) 6:50 13 G Fisichella (It) 6:55 14 M Salo (Fin) 7:00 15 R Barrichello (Bra) 7:05 16 O Panis (Fr) 7:10 17 J Agaj (Ukr) 7:15 18 P Dierke (Bra) 7:20 19 J Venter (Nth) 7:25 20 E Turo (Arg) 7:30 21 S Nakano (Japan) 7:35 22 R Rosset (Bra) 7:40

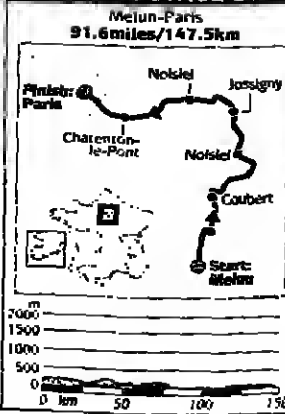
YESTERDAY: STAGE 19



TODAY: STAGE 20



TODAY: STAGE 21



Alcohol ban for part of Headingley

CRICKET

YORKSHIRE HAVE decided to ban spectators from bringing alcohol into part of Headingley for England's decisive fifth Test against South Africa next week.

Consultation with the police and other ground safety agencies have led officials to prevent ticket holders for the Western Terrace bringing their own alcohol into the

ground, although this will not apply to spectators in other areas of the ground, who are still allowed to bring up to four cans of beer in.

"We remain committed to the principle of providing a comfortable and safe environment for the average spectator to enjoy international cricket at Headingley without being subject to the anti-social behaviour of the mindless minority," a spokesman for Yorkshire said. "Sim-

ilar measures are being taken at other provincial Test match venues."

Chief Inspector Ray Shepherd added: "A lot of time and money is spent on the event and we will not allow a handful of ill-behaved idiots to spoil it for everyone else. If they are not in the Headingley ground to enjoy cricket then we will try and make sure they don't get in at all."

Selectors to keep faith, page 24

Gillespie may be on the way out

FOOTBALL

KENNY DALGLISH, the Newcastle manager, could be willing to listen to offers for his winger, Keith Gillespie. With the Middlesbrough manager, Bryan Robson, on the look out for a forward to play out on the Banks, Newcastle's Northern Ireland international could find himself a target for the Premiership newcomers.

Middlesbrough have shown interest for some time now in the West Bromwich Albion winger, Kevin Kil-

bane, but it is believed that Denis Smith, the manager of the First Division club, wants more than Robson may pay.

Middlesbrough, who host a four-team tournament featuring Newcastle, Benfica and Empoli this weekend, are keen to get their man before they start their Premiership campaign against Leeds United in a fortnight's time.

Less than a year ago Gillespie inspired Newcastle to victory over Barcelona in the Champions'

League, laying on two of Faustino Asprilla's three goals. However, he has had a chequered career on Tyne since Kevin Keegan signed him as part of the Andy Cole deal in January 1995.

With both Alan Shearer and Stéphane Guivarch in the middle looking for service from the flanks it might seem unlikely that Newcastle would be open to offers for Gillespie. However, if the Middlesbrough chairman, Steve Gibson, and his manager were able to come

up with a £5m offer then Newcastle might find it too much to turn down.

With the arrival of seven new faces in recent weeks and more to come, United may think it is time to cash in on Gillespie. They have an abundance of wing-backs on the books, including Laurent Chavet and Alessandro Pistone.

Gillespie, meanwhile, has an ankle injury and is ruled out of this weekend's competition. More football, page 25

